

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
MEANS OF EXCITING A SPIRIT OF
NATIONAL INDUSTRY;
CHIEFLY INTENDED TO PROMOTE THE
AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE,
MANUFACTURES, AND FISHERIES,
OF
S C O T L A N D.

VOL II

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NATIONAL INDUSTRY;
CHIEFLY INTENDED TO PROMOTE THE
AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE,
MANUFACTURES, AND FISHERIES,
OF
SCOTLAND.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A FRIEND.
WRITTEN IN THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED
AND SEVENTY-FIVE.

By JAMES ANDERSON,
AUTHOR OF THE ESSAYS RELATING TO AGRICULTURE AND
RURAL AFFAIRS.

Resolve, resolve, and to be men aspire.....
Let godlike Reason, from her sovereign throne,
Speak the commanding word I WILL, and it is done,
THOMSON.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

D U B L I N:
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MDCCCLXXIX.



OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER TWELFTH.

Vol. II.

B

C O N T E N T S.

Objections to the concluding part of last letter.—Answers.

—An historic investigation, by which it appears, that English wool was long in the highest degree of estimation in Italy and the Netherlands:—That it was more esteemed in Italy than Spanish wool:—That in the 15th century it sold at a higher price in the Netherlands:—That it was at least equally valued there in the 16th century.

—A review of the wool-trade and woollen manufacture of England from its origin to the present time, shewing the steps by which it gradually attained to its highest degree of perfection under Elisabeth.—Eulogium of that great princess and her ministers.—Repeated attempts of the manufacturers to obtain a monopoly of English wool:—They at length succeed under Charles II. when the law prohibiting the exportation of wool was first in good earnest enacted.—Consequences that resulted from that law:—The price of wool falls; and the number of sheep, in consequence thereof, is much diminished:—The greatest fall of price takes place with regard to fine wool, and why:—Hence no care has been since taken to improve its quality, the carcase of the sheep having become the principal object of the farmer's attention.—Coarse wool, and the manufactures for the poor, rather encreased in price.—Fine wool thus gradually disappears in England, and it becomes necessary to import and manufacture *Spanish* wool.—Hence Britain possesses no longer that evident superiority over other nations with regard to the woollen manufacture that she undoubtedly enjoyed in the days of Elisabeth, and is at best but on an equality with other nations as to the manufacture of *fine* cloth.—Hence the decline of the Turkey trade,—of the trade in woollen stuffs to Sweden, Russia, Prussia, and many parts of Germany.—The precarious footing the British clothing-trade to Spain,—and Portugal.—No prospect of recovering these branches of trade but by rearing fine wool in Scotland.—The *Duling* trade in England totally owing to the same ill-judged law against the exportation of wool:—Extent of that illicit trade.—A sketch of the exceeding pernicious tendency of it.—Necessity of repealing that destructive law.

OBSERVATIONS

O. N

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER TWELFTH.

TO MR. LONDON.

November 21. 1775.

I THANK you, my dear Sir, for your very obliging packet of the 13th instant, which is now before me. It gives me much pleasure to think that I have had it in my power to contribute to your amusement. The objections you make to what has been said, is to me the most unequivocal mark of your being interested in the discussion that I have entered into; which is
B 2 a suffi-



a sufficient motive to induce me to do all I can to remove such doubts as may have occurred to you on considering this subject, and to afford you all the satisfaction in my power with regard to those other matters about which you are still desirous of being informed.

You seem to be much surpris'd at the hints I gave in the concluding part of my last letter; as these, you say, are so contrary to the general sense of the knowing part of the English nation.—“The woollen manufacture of England in a tottering state:—The British parliament to have adopted monopolish ideas:—The quality of the wool of England inferior now to what it formerly was!—These are ideas so repugnant to the general sense of every British subject, and they are so plainly contradicted by the very flourishing state of our woollen manufactures at present, as cannot be admitted to be well founded without a very satisfactory proof.”

You tell me, farther, that you have conversed with some very sensible people on this subject; and in particular with a very intelligent man, who has made a considerable fortune by the woollen manufacture; all of whom differ
so

so much from me in opinion as to this particular, and produce such strong reasons in support of their own way of thinking, as convinces you that I must be mistaken with regard to it. On which account you desire that I would either give you fuller information as to that head, or acknowledge that I have been hurried away by my partiality to my country in this respect; which you, with your usual good-nature, observe would be a very pardonable error.

THIS I own is a heavy charge; and might perhaps have alarmed me a little, had I not attended to this subject with a more than ordinary care. But to me it is not in the least surprising: for I do not know a subject that has been more universally misrepresented by political writers, than almost every thing relating to the woollen manufacture has been;—nor do I know one in which so many errors have been carelessly adopted; which have been so often repeated by one writer after another as undoubted truths, that it is no wonder if those who are obliged to content themselves with the usual sources of information, should in this case be very much deceived.

KNOWING

KNOWING these things, I was neither surpris-
ed at your scepticism on this head, nor alarm-
ed at the positive confidence of those you have
consulted. I should have been well pleased to
have heard the arguments they made use of to
you, that I might have been enabled to return
direct answers to them: but as I can guess at
the general scope of these, I shall content my-
self with pointing out a few facts that will be
so directly the reverse of many that might pro-
bably be mentioned by them, as will serve to
encrease your surprise a little in one respect.

It is well known, that English wool has
been long held in very high estimation over all
Europe. But our historians of old were so
much employed in relating military achieve-
ments, as to neglect the more important his-
tory of the progress of civil society, and the
advancement of arts and manufactures; so that
we in vain attempt now to discover with cer-
tainty the origin or progress of our woollen
manufacture, or the time when the wool of
England began to be prized among foreign na-
tions. Yet even in the midst of that general
obscurity, there are not wanting some circum-
stances that afford sufficient indications, that
the

the wool of this island was held in great estimation at a very early period; and that the woollen manufacture was established in England long before the time that historians usually begin to take notice of it.

THE Romans, according to Camden, finding the wool of Britain remarkable for its fineness, established a manufacture of cloths at Winchester, for the use of the emperors. And *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, in his treatise *De situ orbis*, as quoted by Hollinghed, (*Chron. of England*, p. 221.) saith, "*That the wool of Great Britain is often spun so fine, that it is fit a manner comparable to the spider's draught.*" And although, during the troubles in which Britain was involved after the Romans left it, it is not to be doubted that the woollen manufacture declined; yet it still kept some footing in the island, and had made considerable advances towards perfection before the time of Edward III. who is commonly thought to have first introduced that manufacture here*. Nor

* Fabian remarks of Edward the elder, who died anno 925, that "he set his sons to scole, and his daughters he set to woll werke, taking example of Charles the Conquestour." *Chron.* c. 179.

is there any doubt that the wool of England was long greedily coveted by all the manufacturing countries in Europe, and was for many ages

Anno 1172, King Henry II. issues an ordinance against making cloth of English wool mixed with Spanish, Hist. of commerce, p. 189.

Madox, in his *Firma burgi* observes, that as early as the year 1180, there was in London a lawful guild-fraternity of weavers: from whence it is plain, that the cloth-manufacture must have been then established in England. ib. p. 70.

1225. In the Magna Charta of Henry III. there is this article: "That there be one breadth of dyed cloths, russets, and haberjets; i. e. two yards within the lists."—Hence it is plain, the manufacture of broad cloth had been before that fully established in the island.

1284. Edward I. gave certain privileges to strangers, among which are liberty to export, as follows, viz.

"Wool,—duty 40 pence over the old duty of half a mark."

—Hence it is plain, that the export of wool had been practised of old time.

"Item, Cloth dyed scarlet in grain,—duty two shillings each cloth."—What is meant here by "scarlet in grain" is not certain: for it is well known, that the colour now called scarlet, dyed with cochineal, is a late discovery.—Probably this might be the colour made with kermes grains;—but whatever it was, there is no doubt but the woollen manufacture had then attained to a considerable perfection.

"Item,—1s. 6d. for every cloth in which a grain colour is intermixed."—Would not this seem to imply, that that kind of mixed cloth called now scribbled was then made here?—an invention supposed of a much later date.

"Item,—12 pence for every cloth without grain." Thus it appears, that England at this early period possessed the woollen manufacture in several branches to perfection, and exported cloths dyed and scribbled, as well as colourless.—

How

ages a principal branch of our foreign commerce. The Venetians, Florentines, Genoese, and other Italian states, obtained it from hence in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.—

And after the Flemings began their woollen manufacture, and the Dukes of Brabant, from their vicinity, and conveniency for other branches of trade, obtained exclusive privileges with regard to the commerce of wool, many were the particular treaties, and numberless the embassies of the Italian states to obtain permission to export wool directly from Britain;

How they came afterwards to lose these two first arts, deserves to be enquired into. For it is certain, that, till within this century past, English cloths were always exported undyed, since the woollen manufacture began to be taken notice of by ordinary historians.

I could not omit inserting this note pretty much at large, as it shows how little our historians in general are acquainted with the state of the trade or manufactures of the kingdom; this being upwards of a hundred years prior to the time that they assign for the first introduction of the woollen manufacture into England.

It would seem that the woollen manufacture had been established at a very early period in Scotland also: For, in the year 1393, Thomas Dunbar Earl of Moray granted to the town of Elgin, all the *wool, cloth*, and other things that go by ship out of his harbour of Spey, duty-free. Hist. of Moray, p. 193.

Hence *wool* and *cloth* were such considerable articles of export as to deserve to be particularly mentioned in preference to all others.

as may be seen by consulting the statutes, — a few of which for your satisfaction are quoted in the margin*.

DURING

* It has been remarked in the last note, that wool was a common article of export long before the year 1228; — but that it had been a great article of commerce long before that time, is evident from this circumstance, That when Richard I. on his return from the Holy Land anno 1193, was made prisoner by the Duke of Austria, one year's wool was borrowed from the abbey of the Cistercian order, and of the religious house of the order of Sempringham, towards payment of the King's ransom. — Wool therefore must have been at that time a great and staple export of the kingdom, and must have been carried on for ages before that.

1297. K. Edward I. imposed a duty of 40s. a-sack upon all wool exported. At the same time it was affirmed, that the wool in Great Britain was equal to half the value of the lands in England, Hume, vol. 2. p. 299. — 301. The commerce of wool must have been at that time very considerable indeed to give occasion for making such an extravagant computation.

Icenia, Norfolk. — “ Hæc ruris pars, ut Occidentis reliqua, pascendis ovibus magnopere exponitur. Pleraque villæ aut unum, aut duo, aut tria, interdum quatuor vel quinque millia nutriunt; ut intelligas *Proceres Angliæ* apud Edw. I. de vestigali lanis imposito conquerentes, consulto affirmasse, opum regni dimidium in lanis consistere.” *RELIQ. SPELMANIANÆ*, (1727), p. 162.

This seems to be the passage alluded to by Hume above, although the assertion here does not appear to be quite so extravagant as he makes it.

1332. *English wool seized at Nice in Provence this year: so that a trade to England for wool must have been at this time carried on from the Mediterranean, Hist. Commerce.* p. 156.

DURING these early periods little mention is made of the wool of Spain; and it is to be observed, that the inhabitants of Roussillon, and Catalonia,

1353. A treaty with the Catalonians.—*Liberty granted to buy wool in England.*

1408. At the earnest request of the Doge of Venice liberty granted to export wool from England.

1413. The same liberty granted to them by K. Henry V.

1437. Permission to the King of Portugal to export to Florence 600 sacks of Cotswold wool.—See hereafter p. 2, 13.

1439. All wools to be carried to Calais; except that for the Straits, on account of the merchants of Venice,—Genoa,—Tuscany,—Lombardy, and Catalonia.

1470. A permission granted by Richard II, to a Florentine merchant for 600 sacks,—and 1200 sacks to another.

Another by Edward IV. to carry wool through the Straits of Morocco.

1472. Liberty granted to the Dukes of Burgundy to export 50 sacks of wool duty-free to the Mediterranean.

1474. Another licence to Laurence de Medici, of Florence, to export wool to the Mediterranean.

1480. King Edward IV. grants a licence to his sister Margaret Dukes of Burgundy to export annually duty-free 2000 rams to Holland, Flanders, and Zeland.

From this circumstance we may plainly perceive, that the Flemings were at this time extremely desirous of having English wool, and made this attempt to improve the wool of their own native sheep.—But the climate would effectually prevent them from ever being able to rear it so fine as it would naturally be in England.

We find still in Zeland and Flanders a breed of large sheep that carry long combing-wool, of the nature of that of Lincolnshire, but coarser, which are probably the descendants of the sheep improved by Margaret.

Some

Catalonia, which countries now afford finer wool than any in Britain, were among the purchasers of our wool. It is likewise worth remarking,

Some of our historians take notice of a present of rams sent by Edward IV. about this time to the King of Arragon, which it is supposed was the beginning of the breed of fine-wooled sheep in Spain. This improbable story has been greedily swallowed by the English; although there is not the smallest probability of this having been the case. For before this period the wool of Spain was very fine, and a considerable trade in that article was carried on to the Netherlands. But if the fineness of the Spanish wool was to be ascribed to this cause, the wools of Arragon ought to be the finest, whereas it is notorious that those of Castile are beyond comparison the finest in Spain.

I have in vain endeavoured to find an authentic proof of such a present having been sent to the King of Arragon, and I am convinced that the story has taken its rise from this permission granted by Edward IV. to his sister to export rams to Holland, &c. Such mistakes are by no means uncommon in matters of this sort.

Other historians assert, that Edward received this present of sheep from Spain; and that the fineness of the English wool is to be attributed to that cause. Such are the contradictions to be met with in things of this nature.

1486. Another treaty with the Florentines, and liberty granted to export wool, &c. to Florence, without going to Calais.

1488. Another regulation in favour of Italians, viz. those of Venice,—Genoa,—Florence,—and Lucca, to export wool, &c.

1490. Another treaty with Florence, in which the English are annually to import, at Pisa, as much wool as the Florentines and other parts of Italy (Venice excepted) can work up or use.

marking, that Cotswold wool seems always to have been in greatest request, as being most proper for the manufacture of fine cloths, chiefly at that time carried on by the Venetians. But it is well known, that the finest Cotswold wool at present is not proper for making superfine cloths, as all our superfines are made of Spanish wool, without any mixture of English at all.

From these facts it would seem probable, that at that period English wool was not inferior to Spanish. And King Henry II. seems to have apprehended, that the Spanish wool was of an inferior quality to that of England, as he published an ordinance as early as the year

600 sacks of wool, permitted to the Venetians.
1519. A fresh liberty to the Genoese to export wool, &c. see Anderson's History of Commerce under the respective years. The only remark I shall make upon all these treaties is this:—That had not the English wool been in high estimation in all the countries of Italy, they would not have submitted to the perpetual trouble of getting new regulations almost every year for favouring this branch of commerce.—It is plain, that the design of all these permissions was, to prevent the Italians from being under the necessity of going to Calais or Bruges for the wool, where the staple was by law fixed;—as it was much easier for them to export it directly from Southampton than from the staple in the Netherlands.

1772, against mixing Spanish wool with English in the manufacture of broad cloth*. From which time we hear no mention made of Spanish wool in the English manufactures for many centuries downwards.

It likewise appears, that as early as the reign of Edward III. English wool was reckoned finer than that of any of the neighbouring states; as we find, that in the year 1338 that monarch issued a proclamation, forbidding, under severe penalties, the exportation of any live sheep from this island, to prevent other nations from improving their wool, and coming into competition with us in the market with that commodity †.

BUT the circumstance which proves, in the most satisfactory manner, the very high estimation in which Cotswold wool was held over all Europe about that period, is a permission granted by Henry VI. of England to Don Duarte King of Portugal, in the year 1437, to export sixty sacks of Cotswold wool, by means of which he was to procure certain cloths of gold from Florence for the King's

* History of Commerce.

† Rymer, vol. 5. p. 36.

(of Portugal) use*. At this time Portugal was at peace with the King of Castile, and the two kings in great amity, Alphonso of Castile being married with the sister of the King of Portugal. — So that it would seem the Florentines at that time preferred Cotswold wool to the best of Spain; as the King of Portugal could have procured Spanish wool with less trouble than English, had it been as much valued by the manufacturers.

By another circumstance we likewise have a very strong proof, that English wool was about that period more valuable than Spanish wool. For in the year 1470, a Spanish vessel bound for the Netherlands having been taken by an English privateer, the owners make complaint to the King, and demand redress. On this occasion, among other articles of which the cargo consisted, they mention sacks of wool; which they say would be worth in Flanders 4l. per sack, each sack weighing one quintal and three quarters. Now as a Spanish quintal is equal in weight to 97lb. English, the Spanish sack of wool contains 159½lb. English. At which rate an English sack of

* Anderson's History of Commerce, vol. 1. p. 263.

Spanish wool, or 364lb. would be worth no more than 9l. 12s. which is below the price of English wool at that time. For,

In the reign of Edward III. the best English wool used to sell in England for about 8l. per sack *; and, in the year 1343, the parliament fix the prices of wool, the highest being fourteen marks, or 9l. 13s. 4d. besides the duty, which was never below 40s. and usually 3l. 6s. 8d. and sometimes so high as 5l. so that the price paid by the foreign merchant in England, supposing the duty 3l. could not be less than 12l. 13s. 4d. To which if we add freight and commission, merchants profits, &c. we cannot suppose that the price of a sack of English wool at Bruges would be less than 13l. which is above a third part more than the Spanish merchants value their own wool at, as above; and it will not be supposed but they rated it at the very highest price †. From all

* *Vide* Smith's *Memoirs of wool*, *passim*.

† I meet with the following note relating to the selling-price of English wool in Brabant, in Rapin's *Acta Regia*, p. 151.

“ And yet in November last (that is 1337) he (Edward
“ III.) had sent the Bishop of *Lincoln*, and the Earls of
“ *Northampton* and *Suffolk*, with 10,000 sacks of wool
“ into

all which circumstances, I think we may fairly conclude, that English wool in the fourteenth century was at least equal in value to Spanish wool.

Now do we find that in the sixteenth century the Spanish wool had obtained any ascendancy over English wool. For, in the year 1560, Lewis Guicciardin, enumerating the exports and imports to and from Bruges and

“ into Brabant, to make retainers in High Germany; and
 “ there at the same time they sold all their wool, every
 “ sack for 40l. which amounted in all to 400,000l.”
 The reader may infer what he pleases from this;—but the price appeared to me so high, that I suspect there must be here some mistake. I therefore chose to adhere to more moderate and indisputable facts for fixing the rate of wool in the text.

It deserves, however, to be remarked, that the price of the finest wool in England must at that time have been much above the price fixed by parliament: for this was meant as a price at which every individual might redeem his wool from the King, if he so inclined; on which occasion it is not to be expected that they would fix on the very highest price. It was besides only the average price of a whole county or district that they fixed upon; so that the best wool in that district must of necessity have been much above the regulated price.—Probably the best wool in England might have been then sold for about 14 or 15 pounds at least, which, in Brabant, could not have been afforded for less than 18 or 20 pounds, and may have been much higher on some occasions.



Antwerp, mentions, among the exports from England, English wool, calling it *lane finissime*; and distinguishes at the same time Spanish wool by the phrase *lane boneffime**; by which it would seem that *fineness* was the distinguishing characteristic of English wool even at that time. Nor does he on any occasion shew the smallest preference to Spanish wool, but rather the reverse, as he usually mentions English wool before Spanish where he has occasion to mention them together. Thus among the exports to Milan he specifies *English* and *Spanish* wool, &c.

AND in another place he in express terms gives the preference to English wool when compared with Spanish. "Le lane (says he, "p. 10.) del paese sono grosse, & non hanno "che fare di bonta con quella di Spagna, et "*manco con quelle d'Inghilterra.*" That is, the wool of the country is coarse, and is not equal in goodness to that of Spain, and still less to that of England.

AND that English wool was in truth more valuable at that time, and was so estimated by

* Guicc. descr. de Paese Bassi. Anversa 1577, p. 122, 123.

the sensible part of the British nation themselves, appears from several passages below, quoted from the collections of Richard Hakluyt, of the Temple, London,—a most attentive observer in the reign of Queen Elizabeth*.

How

* Among many other curious particulars relating to the ancient state of the national commerce of Britain preserved by Hakluyt, is a very sensible, though uncouth poem, which seems to have been written during the reign of Henry VI. with an intention to rouse the ministry from their indolence during that weak prince's reign, and which, among other particulars, mentions the wool of Spain, and confirms the justness of the foregoing remarks. Having advised the English to keep their wool from Flanders, which would thus constrain them to keep peace with Britain, he thus proceeds.

————— For the woolle of England
Susteineth the common Fleemings I understand;
Then if England would her woolle restraine
From Flanders, this followeth in certaine,
Flanders of nede [need] must with us have peace,
Or els [else] shee is destroyed without lees [release].
Also if Flanders thus destroyed bee,
Some merchandy of Spain will never ythee, [find vent];
For destroyed it is, and as in cheese,
The wolle of Spain it cometh not to *pruse*, [does not
stand the test, proof];
But if it be costed and menged [mixed] well
Amongst the English wolle the greater delle, [deal,—the
greater part English],
For Spanish wooll in Flaunders draped is,
And ever hath bee, [been], that men have minde of this;

How different, alas! is the case at present,
when Spanish wool sells in Britain from three
to

And yet wooll is one of the chiefe merchandy [merchan-
dise]

That longeth [belongeth] to Spaine: who so will espie,
It is of little value, trust unto mee,
With English wooll but if it mended [mixed] bee.

vol. i. p. 188.

And again, speaking of the Scottish trade in wool to the
Netherlands, chiefly manufactured at *Belle* and *Popperinge*,
he says,

And yet they of *Bell* and *Popperinge*
Could never drape their wooll for any thing;
But if they had English wooll withal,
Our goodly wooll, which is so generall
Needful to them of Spaine, and Scotland als, [also],
And other costes, [costs], this sentence is not fals.
[false].

ib. p. 191.

Mr. Hakluyt himself begins his directions to Mr. Morgan
Hubblethorne dyer, when sent at the public expence into
Persia in the year 1579, for improvement in the art of dy-
ing, in the following words:

“For that England hath the best wooll and cloth in the
“world,” &c.

And in another set of instructions for a principal English
factor at Constantinople are the following remarkable parti-
culars.

“First, You cannot denie but that this realme yeeldeth
“the most fine wooll, the most soft, the most strong
“wooll, the most durable cloth, and most apte of nature
“of all other to receive die; and that no island, or any
“other

to five shillings per pound, while the best carding-wool of Cotswold or Leominster may be

“ other kingdome so small, doeth yeeld so great abundance
“ of the same,” &c.

“ *Second*, There is no commoditie of this realme that may
“ set so many poor subjects on worke, as this doeth, that
“ doeth bring in so much treasure, and so much enricheth
“ the merchant, and so much employ the navie of this
“ realme, as this commoditie of our wooll doeth.”

“ Ample and full vent of this noble and rich commoditie
“ is it that the common weale of this realme doeth require.

“ Spaine nowe aboundeth with woolls, and the same are
“ clothed, [draped or worked into cloth]. Turkie hath
“ woolls, and so have divers provinces of Christendome
“ and Heathenesse, and cloth is made of the same in divers
“ places.

“ 1. But if England have the most fine and the most ex-
“ cellent woolls of the world in all respects (as it cannot
“ bee denied but it hath); 2. If there may bee added to
“ the same excellent artificiall, and true making, and ex-
“ cellent dying: 3. Then no doubt but that we shall have
“ vent for our clothes, although the rest of the world did
“ abound much more with wooll than it doeth, and al-
“ though their workmanship and their dying were in every
“ degree equal with ours in England, unlesse the labour of
“ our people employed that way, and the materials used
“ in dying, should be the cause of the contrary by dearth.

“ But if forren nations turne their woolls, inferior to
“ ours, into truer and more excellent made cloth, and
“ shall dye the same in truer, surer, and more excellent
“ and more durable colours, then shall they sell and make
“ ample vent of their clothes, when the English cloth of
“ better wooll shall rest unfold, to the spoyle of the mer-
“ chant, of the clothier, and of the breeder of the wooll,
“ and to the turning to bag and wallet of the infinite num-
“ ber

be bought for less than one shilling *;—and when our best manufacturers acknowledge, that there is not an ounce of English wool that can be employed in making our best superfine cloths,—and only a small proportion in our

“ber of the poor people employed in clothing in several degrees of labour here in England.—

“The woolls being naturall, and excellent colours for dying becoming by this means here also naturall, in all the art of clothing, we want but only one especial thing, viz. Oil.”

Hack. vol. 2. p. 161.—163.

Mr. Arthur Edwards, agent for the Russian company, anno 1568, gives the following account of the trade to Venice in wool and woollen stuffs from England.

“The Venetian merchants in London, sent to Venice, and from thence to Turkie by Haleppo and Tripoli in Syria, and thence into Persia, great abundance of fine kurfies, of broad cloths of all sorts and colours, as scarlets, violets, and other of the finest cloths of all the world. Also that the Venetians brought out of England not only such cloths ready made, but furthermore great plenty of *fine wooll* to mingle with their woolls, of which they could not otherwise make fine cloths; affirming, that there went out of England that waies, above two hundred thousand kurfies, and as many broad cloths, besides *fine wooll* and other merchandize; beside also great abundance of the like cloths, the which were carried into Spaine, Barbarie, and divers other countries.
“*Hack. vol. 1. p. 392.*”

* In the year 1719, we learn from the *Sieur Pierre Riccardo*, in his *Traité le negoce D'Amsterdam*, p. 86. that the several

our seconds?—At what time the wool of Spain came to obtain such a decided superiority over that of England, I have not been able to ascertain with precision. But by attending to our laws relating to the woollen manufacture we shall be able to give a pretty probable guess at the several changes it may be supposed to have undergone,—and the means by which it has gradually fallen to its present state.

It

several wools of Europe and of Persia sold there at the following prices, viz.

WOOLS of GERMANY.

	Per	Florins.	Eng. Mon.*
			d.
1. De Rostock & de Grippefwald, de Stralfund & d'Anclam,	100 lb.	{ 44 a 45 }	= 10
2. De Stetin, de Thorn, de Dantzick, & de Pruss,	100 lb.	{ 46 a 51 }	= 11
3. De Colberg, de Lunneburg, & de Breme,	100 lb.	30 a 33	= 7

WOOLS of POLAND.

	Dutch sols per lb.	English Money.
		s. d. s. d.
4. Laine d'Ete de Pologne, -	9 a 11	= 9½ to 1 0½

WOOLS of PERSIA.

5. Laine de Carmenie	{ Rouge, 44 a 46	= 4 1 to 4 3
	{ Blanc, 32 a 39	= 3 0 to 3 6

* The last column is nearly per pound at a medium, in English shillings and pence.

SPANISH

It is difficult to say at what time Britain first began to export wool as an article of commerce, or to manufacture it in stuffs for her

SPANISH WOOLS.

		<i>Dutch sold per lb.</i>	<i>English Money.</i>
		<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
6. De Segovie;	{ Superfine, - 40 a 41 =	3	9 to 3 10½
	{ Fine, - 36 a 37 =	3	4 to 3 5½
	{ Ordinaire, - 30 a 31 =	2	9 to 2 10½
7. De Burgos,	{ Fine, - 31 a 32 =	2	10½ to 2 11½
	{ Do. ordinaire, 30 a 31 =	2	9½ to 2 10½
8. De Soria,	{ Segoviane, } 32 a 33 =	2	11½ to 3 1½
	{ De los rios, } 28 a 29 =	2	7 to 2 8½
	{ De Lomberos, 25 a 26 =	2	4 to 2 5½
9. Albarazins,	{ Grande, - 27 a 28 =	2	6½ to 2 7½
	{ Ditto fine, - 21 a 22 =	1	11 to 2 0½
10. Cassites,	- 27 a 28 =	2	6½ to 2 7½
11. Seguença,	{ Segoviane, - 30 a 31 =	2	9½ to 2 10½
	{ Seguença, - 21 a 30 =	1	11½ to 2 9½
12. Quença,	- 23 a 24 =	2	2 to 2 3½
13. Castele de Bues	- 24 a 25 =	2	3½ to 2 4½
14. Serena,	- 22 a 23 =	2	0½ to 2 2
15. Malaga ordinaire,	- 19 a 20 =	1	9½ to 1 10½
16. De Puertos,	- 29 a 30 =	2	8½ to 2 9½
17. Cavalleros,	- 30 a 31 =	2	9½ to 2 10½
18. Molina,	- 26 a 27 =	2	5½ to 2 6½
19. De Castile,	- 25 a 26 =	2	4 to 2 5½
20. De Campo,	- 18 a 19 =	1	10½ to 1 11½
21. De Estramadure,	- 23 a 24 =	2	2 to 2 3
22. De Seville,	- 20 a 21 =	1	10½ to 1 11½
23. D' Andalusie,	- 20 a 22 =	1	10½ to 2 0½
24. De Navarre,	- 13 a 14 =	1	2½ to 1 3½
25. D' Estramadure,	- 20 a 23 =	1	10½ to 2 2
26. De Trexito,	- 24 a 25 =	2	3 to 2 4½
27. Laines de Portugal,	- 22 a 28 =	2	0½ to 2 7½

That

own use or that of others: but it has been already shewn, that both of these were practised in this country at a very early period.

But That the reader may compare this with the prices in England, I here subjoin a list of the prices there, taken out of Smith's Memoirs of Wool, ch. 171.

Lincolnshire wool sold 1719.

	Per tod.
1. Sold to Mr. Stocks, at - - -	£. 1 2 0
Sold to ditto, at - - -	0 16 0
2. William Emmet, - - -	1 0 0
3. John Westmoreland, - - -	0 19 6
4. William Harrison at Fiskerton, - - -	1 0 3
5. Mr. Simon of Bullington, - - -	1 1 0
6. John Holworth of Fiskerton, - - -	1 1 0
Medium price, - - -	£. 0 19 11
Sold by Mr. Clepston of Walsbey at - - -	1 0 0
Medium prices of wool bought by Mr. Davies	
woolstapler in Grantham, 1719, - - -	1 0 0
Mr. Perceval Teal of Smuggham, - - -	1 0 6
Medium price of the whole, - - -	£. 1 0 1½
or 8 pence halfpenny per pound.	

In the year 1739, the medium prices were as under:

	s.	d.
Lincolnshire wool, - - - -	13	0
Cotswold wool, - - - -	11	6
Wiltshire wool, - - - -	11	0
Medium price, - - - -	3) 35	6
	11	10

or five pence per pound. So that the best wool in England sold in the year 1739 for less than one ninth part of the price

But in the time of Edward III. the trade in wool was so considerable, that there was exported in one year to the amount of 294,088l. 14s. 8d. which was equal in weight to 729,340l. 11s. 3½d. of the present coin of Great Britain, the pound Sterling having been then nearly a real pound weight of silver*. An amazing sum this, considering the high value of the precious metals in those days.

price that the best Spanish wool sold for at Amsterdam in the year 1719,—the superfine Segovia wool having been then sold at 3s. 10½d. per pound. What a dreadful difference between the case now and what it was in the thirteenth century, when the best English wool exceeded the Spanish by one third at least, perhaps two thirds of its price!

I shall here subjoin the prices of the wool in several places in France, from the *Traité de bêtes à laine*.

	French sols per pound.	English pence nearly.
Fine wool of Rouffillon,	40	= 20
In the province of Maine,	40	= 20
Of Champagne in Berry,	40	= 20
Wool of Sologne,	40	= 20
Of Haute Beauce, long combing-wool,	16	= 8
Of Normandy finest,	30	= 15
Medium of the fine wools in France,	34	= 17

So that the medium price of the finest wools in France is about three times more than the finest wools in Britain.

* Vide Appendix, N°. 1.

UNDER

UNDER the auspices of that sagacious prince, the wool-manufacture in this island began to be established on a more staple footing than formerly: by means of which, and the export of wool, the industrious people were employed;—the landed interest shared in the profits; and the crown enjoyed a considerable revenue:—so that all ranks of people experienced the benefits of his wise regulations in this respect. And although the nation was alternately weakened by the foolish desire of conquests with which its kings were seized, and by bloody civil wars,—yet at every interval of repose, it waxed stronger, and advanced a little towards that eminence in commerce and in arts which it hath since so happily attained.

It was not to be expected, that the just principles of commerce should be at once thoroughly understood by a rude people making their first essays in that art. But experience gradually taught them knowledge; and the sagacious penetration of Henry VII. enabled him to discover and correct many abuses that had been adopted by his predecessors, and shun some errors into which his successors have fallen.—So that during his reign the manufacturing

manufacturing part of the nation experienced a greater degree of internal felicity than at any former period.

BUT it was not till the happy æra of Elizabeth, that the principles of commerce began to be properly studied and understood in Britain; and the dictates of right reason so happily adopted, and steadily pursued, as raised it to a still higher pitch of internal felicity; and laid the foundation for that prosperity and glory that we now enjoy. But the wisest counsels last but for a time; and the best-laid plans for promoting the felicity of mankind are often frustrated by the folly, the avidity, or the pride of mortals.

ELISABETH saw with regret, that a spirit of monopoly had too much prevailed in the kingdom before her day. Powerful companies, by ministering to the wants of needy princes, had obtained privileges, that, although disguised under the specious appearance of public benefits to the nation, had cramped individuals in many respects, and hindered them from reaping those benefits that their sober industry gave them a just title to expect.

—She knew, that it was not the riches of a few

a few overgrown monopolists that could ever constitute the real strength of her dominions; but the prosperity and happiness of the lowest individuals who were under her dominion. — She therefore boldly resolved to crush those powerful companies that had attained almost a sovereign power in some respects, and, with an impetuous steadiness, peculiarly her own, ceased not till she had freed the nation from their thralldom, and planted the tree of Liberty at the door of the meanest cottage in England, under the benign influence of which every man might exert his talents in that way by which he could most benefit himself, without fear of being annoyed by the power or influence of any one.

BEFORE her time the struggles between the landed and manufacturing interests had been continued for many ages; each trying which should undermine or over-reach the other;— foolishly imagining that their interests were different, and might be separated from one another. And, as princes were sometimes weak enough to adopt the same idea, partial laws were sometimes made, by which the apparent interests of the one were obliged to give way to those of the other.

THE

THE great point contended for by the manufacturers was, to obtain a monopoly of the wool that grew in the island, by excluding strangers from coming to purchase it here ;—hoping, that if this could ever be effected, the price of that commodity would be so much lowered, as would give them such a superiority over all other manufacturers that were not under the same circumstances with themselves, as to secure to them in a great measure a monopoly of the woollen manufacture itself through all the world. But vain are the hopes that man may form of lasting success in life, unless when his views are founded upon the solid basis of equity, which alone can withstand the shocks that every human undertaking must for ever be exposed to.

PRINCES, however, were sometimes prevailed upon to humour their subjects in their unreasonable demands : but the profits that accrued to them by the exportation of wool were too considerable to be sacrificed almost on any account. Laws were made to prohibit the exportation of wool, with an *apparent* view to serve these monopolists,—but with a *real* intention to bring more money to the prince,—who by selling licences for that purpose, filled

filled his own coffers in a more expeditious way than he could have done if these prohibitory laws had not been made *.

AND

* By the 11th Edward III. it was enacted, That "it shall be felony to carry any wool beyond the realm until it shall be otherwise ordained." These are the words of the statute, by which it appears, that it was only a prohibition on the part of the people, which the crown considered itself at liberty to dispense with in virtue of a writ *de non obstante*; which was a power they had copied from the court of Rome, by which it was allowed, That the crown had power to dispense with a penal law, when prohibiting only that which is not *malum in se*: A privilege that was claimed, and exercised, by the crown, as one of its undoubted prerogatives, from before this time till the revolution. In the present case it was fully exercised: for although this law was passed in the month of March 1337, on the 3d of February following another parliament was held, in which the laity granted the King one half of their wool for the next summer; at the same time he took the whole from the clergy, forcing them to redeem it at nine marks per sack.

And in Rymer, tome 5. we meet with the following passes in the year 1338.

1. *Pro mercatoribus Brabantie*, A pass for 2200 sacks, p. 32.

2. *De conductu pro lana Cardinalium*. A safe conduct for a certain quantity of wool to be exported to Brabant, *pro liberatione Summi Pontificis & Cardinalium inde facienda*, p. 44.

3. *Pro mercatoribus Brabantie*, A direction to the admiral to afford the merchants of Brabant a convoy for their wools, p. 51.

4. *De lana capienda, et cum celeritate ad Anwerpian transportanda*, p. 73.

5. *De intend. super lanis transportandis*, p. 80.

I might

AND although the same attempts were continued under the reign of Elizabeth with some hope

I might in the same manner show, that every seeming prohibition that occurs against the exportation of wool from these days till the restoration, was followed by such licences.—Nor indeed was there any thing that had the appearance of seriously intending to prohibit the exportation of wool till the year 1622, that James I. having quarrelled with his parliament, and willing to coax his feeble supporters the monopolists, by proclamation forbid the exportation of wool;—although it appears from the very words of another proclamation for the same effect, issued by his son Charles I. anno 1630, that licences had been granted by him; for he expressly repeals any *former licences* that may be still in force,—probably with a view to reap the benefit that would accrue from the renewal of them. For in the year 1632 he publishes another proclamation against exporting wool, complaining, that his officers have permitted the same to pass, either *without licence*, or *in greater quantities than the licences allowed of*. So that we see licences were still permitted, notwithstanding his proclamation to the contrary.

A. D. 1639. Another proclamation against exporting wool, &c. any *licences or toleration* formerly granted notwithstanding—Rapin tells us, (vol. 2. p. 308.) that “about this time the King did publish a proclamation to revoke sundry monopolies, licences, and commissions, that he had granted by letters patents. But very likely this was to amuse the people; and the proclamation was not executed, since the next year he published another, to revoke the same monopolies that had been abolished by this.”

Something of the same kind seems to have been intended by an ordinance of parliament in the year 1647, prohibiting the exportation of wools under severe penalties; seeing a sensible writer, in a book published in the year 1656, called

hope of success, from having observed with what attention she continued to cherish the manufactures of her kingdom, yet her counsellors were too wise to be imposed upon by their impolitic attempts *. And although she

called the *Golden Fleece*, speaking of this subject, says, "In this part of our complaint we presume not to meddle with licences granted by the state to export raw wool, or white cloths, both of which have been permitted to pass the seas, as well for the good of the people, as for the benefit of clothing itself," &c. p. 96.—Again, p. 97. "As for raw wool, there may be advantage to the commonwealth by their exportation;"—and he afterwards adds, "The place also to which wool may be licenced to pass, ought to be considered," &c.

Thus it appears, that so late as the year 1656, it was customary to grant licences to export wool; nor was this considered as a grievance:—so that it does not appear that ever the legislature seriously intended to prohibit it till after the Restoration. And indeed it is truly ridiculous, to hear writers seriously asserting, (as they have often done), that the exportation of wool was totally prohibited by Edward III. and never was permitted afterwards; as the slightest attention must have convinced them, that exported wool was at all times the principal branch of the revenue of that prince;—and that the duty on wool always formed a part of the tonnage and poundage act, granted by parliament to every succeeding prince at the beginning of his reign, till the days of Charles I.

* A political writer in the year 1679 says, "It was an observation of Lord Burleigh, that if wool fell one shilling in the stone, it was a million a year loss to the nation." Such were the sentiments of that able statesman. How different from the politics of after times!

voluntarily prohibited the exportation of rams, yet she could never be prevailed with to give any check to the exportation of wool from her dominions.

BUT the wise counsels of that sagacious princefs were not adhered to by her immediate fucceffors, who, always needy, and grasping at an authority they could not obtain, were too ready to favour every plan that might be fuggelted by favourites, or bring money into their coffers.—James and Charles fucceffively prohibited the exportation of wool by proclamation, and difpenfed with it when they faw fit;—but it was not till the Refloration, that a law was made in good earneft, prohibiting under fevere penalties the exportation of wool to any part of the world. Thus had Charles II. the merit of introducing this monopoly, along with many others, that have fo juftly difgraced his reign.

BUT by what fatality this idea came to be adopted by fucceeding kings, and the legiflature at large, feems to be a little unaccountable.—True it is, however, that this idea has been firenuously adopted by the bulk of the nation ever fince; although experience,

as well as reasoning, ought long ago to have satisfied every considerate person, that its consequences, if continued, must not only prove pernicious, but absolutely ruinous, to the woollen manufactures of the nation; as I hope you will be convinced of from what follows.

The first effect that was felt from this law, was the sinking the price of wool in England, which was reduced to less than one half of what it used formerly to be*. This was what had been expected; but the woollen manu-

* Vide Smith's Mem. of wool, chap. 176, et passim.
This is further confirmed by Roger Coke, in his treatise, intituled, *The equal danger of church, state, and trade, of England*, p. 18. who says, "And yet it is felony to export wool: by reason whereof it becomes a drug, and of no esteem at home; so that, if the poor country-man cannot sell it at home, himself and family must be undone; or if he seeks subsistence by endeavouring to find a market abroad, he incurs a penalty." Printed 1671.

Another writer to the same purport observes, "It is to be feared, that of late not one third part of the wool which is growing in this nation, is consumed in our woollen manufacture, but is sent over to our neighbours; and they buying most of the wool growing in Ireland, they have almost gotten the manufacture from us, and we undone; the prices of wool being so low, that if people did not send it beyond seas, they would not in many places be able to pay half their rents, wool falling in value as much as land." *Letter on the French usurpations on the trade of England*. By J. R. 1679, p. 11.

facture did not increase in proportion. For during all the reign of Charles II. and James II. the woollen exports never amounted, at a medium, to above one half of what they had been in the days of Elizabeth: for, in the year 1566, Guiccardin remarks, that the exports of wool and woollen stuffs from England to Antwerp alone, amounted to 4,250,000 scudi or crowns, or 1,062,500 l. Sterling; in which he is corroborated by Camden.—Besides which, England carried on at that time a very considerable trade to *Amsterdam, Hamburg, Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Muscovy, Italy, Barbary*, and a considerable contraband trade to *France, Spain, and Portugal*; so that, at a moderate computation, the woollen exports, could not be reckoned at that time lower than 2,000,000 l. annually; whereas the woollen exports from the middle to the end of the next century, did not, at a medium, exceed 1,000,000 l. annually*. But there were other consequences that resulted from thence that were not so clearly apprehended.

From the low price of wool, and the difficulty of vending it, farmers were naturally

* Vide King's British merchant.

induced

induced to diminish the number of their sheep, and turn themselves to some other more profitable employment *; so that in a short time the benefit that resulted from thence to the manufacturer

* That the number of sheep in England is greatly decreased since the days of Elizabeth, is sufficiently obvious from the following considerations.

1. From the probability that this would be the case, in consequence of the great fall in the price of wool after the exportation of it was prohibited;—as it is certain, that mankind will in general be governed in cases of this sort by their own interest.

2. Before that period there is frequent mention made of numerous tumults in various parts of the kingdom, by the poor people, the cause of which they invariably declare to be to prevent inclosures, and the *great increase of sheep*, which they always complained of as the cause of every distress they felt;—which at least shows that sheep then abounded very much.

3. We find parliament frequently regulating the price of provisions;—but never any mention is then made of any sort of grain.—Thus, *anno* 1315, the parliament fix these prices; a fat ox 16 s.—a cow 12 s.—a hog 3 s. 4 d.—a wether unshorn 20 d.—ditto shorn 14 d.—a goose 2 s. d.—a capon 2 d.—a hen 1 d.—But no limitation of the price of grain.—Again, 1532, there was a law limiting the price of beef and pork at 1 d. mutton and veal at $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, in London.—Many other laws to the same effect may be found in Stowe, Stillingfleet, &c.; all of which show, that the legislature considered *meat* to be the principal article of food for all kind of people, and bread as only secondary to that.

4. That this was actually the case, may be certain from the prodigious variations that took place in the prices of grain.—For had mankind had as much reliance upon it then

manufacturer was far less considerable than was at first apprehended.

AGAIN, while wool was allowed to be exported freely upon paying a certain duty, the

as now, it would have been impossible for them to have been subsisted at all on many occasions, the wheat fluctuating often suddenly from 1s. to 4l. or 5, or 6, per quarter, or *vice versa*.

5. This seems to be still farther confirmed by the inconsiderable variation in the prices of live stock.—Thus we see, that, in the year 1318, an ox was 16 s. a hog 3 s. 4 d. and a wether 20 d.

Anno 1444, the price of an ox 1l. 11s. 8d.—a hog 3 s.

1530, an ox 1l. 5s. 9d.—a sheep 3 s.

1531, an ox 1l. 6s. 8d.—a sheep 2 s. 10 d.—a hog 3 s. 8 d.

1563, an ox 2l.—a sheep 6 s.—a swine 6 s.

From which it appears, that the prices of these articles have varied almost as little as grain does with us now.

6. In the days of Elisabeth, and before that period, we find in all regulations of household affairs, almost the whole of the provisions mentioned is meat of one sort or other, and very little bread.—The breakfast of Queen Elisabeth and her maids of honour was beef, mutton, &c. in large quantities, but little bread.

From all these circumstances, I think we may with safety conclude, that till about the time of the Restoration meat of one sort or other constituted the principal part of the food of all ranks of people in England; and since that time bread has come to be more and more used, till it may now, with great propriety, be called *the staff of life*. Hence it will follow, that live stock of all kinds, but especially sheep, (mutton having been in those times always cheaper than beef), abounded more then than at present;—and that grain abounds much more now than in former times.

finest

finest was most coveted by foreign merchants, because the duty bore a smaller proportion to its price, than it did to the price of that which was coarser; on which account, fine wool, having the benefit of a foreign market, as well as of that at home, sold at a very high price;—whereas coarser wool, having no other market but at home, was obliged to be sold at exceeding low prices. In consequence of which peculiarity, farmers finding so much greater profit from rearing fine than coarse wool, made it a material part of their business to improve their wools in this respect to the utmost of their power. But when foreign merchants were excluded from coming to market, the quantity of fine wool becoming at once so much greater than the demand for it, would fall in its value to such a degree, as to be little different from the low-priced wools.—It was not after that period, as it had always been before, an object of attention to preserve or improve the quality of the wool.—The farmer's attention came then to be chiefly directed to the improvement of the carcase of his sheep, at from it he derived his most considerable profit.

THESE consequences may be so naturally expected to follow from this arrangement, that
I would

I would not give myself the trouble of searching for examples, to prove that there was a much greater difference between the highest and lowest priced wools in Britain, before the exportation of wool was prohibited, than after that period, had not one come in my way, that is so much in point, that I hope you will excuse me for quoting it.

In the year 1343, the parliament settled the prices of wool, viz. that of Shropshire, at 14 marks, or 9l. 6s. 8d.; of Oxford and Staffordshire, at 13 marks; of Leicester, Gloucester, and Hereford, at 12 marks; and other counties, at 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, &c. till it came to the lowest-priced wool of Cornwall, which was valued at no more than 4 marks per sack*; so that at that time the best wool in England sold at near four times the price that could be drawn for the worst.

THE experience of every man in the least versant in these matters, will easily satisfy him that this is not the case at present, as I believe the best wool in England does not sell at dou-

* Anderson's Hist. of Commerce, p. 1343.

ble the price of the worst, as it comes from the farmer. By a very curious account, preserved in Smith's Memoirs of Wool, ch. 171. we learn, that the medium price of Cotswold wool, from 1737 to 1745, was 13s. 6d. per tod; and that of the isle of Wight for the same time, was, at a medium, 14s.; and as a tod of wool contains exactly twenty-eight pounds, the latter was precisely sixpence per pound, and the former a fraction less. These are reckoned among the finest wools in England; so that at the same proportion coarse wool should have been bought at little more than three halfpence per pound; a price that I believe was never heard of for sound wool of any sort.

BUT although the difference in the price to our own manufacturers was, in the year 1343, nearly as four to one; yet to foreign merchants the difference was not near so great: for as the duty was always a part of the price to them, it must likewise be taken into the account, when we consider *them* as the buyers; and as this duty was for the most part 3l. 6s. 8d.* that, if

* It was sometimes at 4l. and was once at least 5l. per sack.

added to the prices fixed by parliament, would make the price of the finest wool amount to 12l. 13s. 4d. or nineteen marks, and that of the lowest-priced kind to nine marks: so that the coarsest wool in England would have cost the foreign merchant little less than half the price of the finest, (not to mention freight, &c. which would be as high for the coarse as for the fine), the bare duty alone amounting to more than the price of the first, which was an effectual bar to the exportation of it; and to more than one third of the price of the finest: which ought surely to have given our manufacturers such a considerable advantage over their rivals as ought to have satisfied their most ambitious wishes.

THE greatest advantage, however, that the home manufacturers derived from hence, was evidently in favour of those coarse cloths which are manufactured for home consumpt, and afford cloathing to the lower classes of people, who always constitute the principal strength of a state, and whose comfortable subsistence will always claim the principal attention of every considerate legislature. But no sooner were foreigners excluded from our markets, and the number of our sheep diminished, than

babbs the

the price of this coarse wool, which must always be manufactured in greater quantities than fine wool, rose with the demand for it, till it came to be much nearer the same value with the other; and our poor people were of course obliged to pay a higher price for their cloathing, or at best were not at all benefited by this law.—But other evils ensued from this absurd law that deserve to be particularly pointed out.

In a short time, in consequence of the inattention of the farmer to rear fine wool, for which he could receive no adequate price, it was discovered, that the cloth made of our finest wool could not bear a competition in foreign markets with that manufactured in Holland, France, and the Netherlands, from Spanish wool; so that we soon found ourselves obliged, either to give up our manufacture of *fine cloths* entirely, or resort to Spain likewise for the materials of which they are composed. We have chosen to adopt the last line of conduct: and we still carry on a considerable manufacture of *fine cloths*; but under all the disadvantages that every manufacture must experience, that depends upon a foreign country for its raw materials, it being confessed on all hands,

hands, that not one yard of superfine cloth could be manufactured at present with English wool.

In the days of Elisabeth this was not the case. With that spirit of intrepidity that results from conscious independence, she bid defiance to the haughty power of Spain. Her industrious subjects possessing treasures at home, which nothing but their own folly could have deprived them of, with unceasing assiduity studied to avail themselves of these to the utmost, and sent her woollen manufactures to the furthest corners of the known world; and these manufactures were universally prized as the best in Europe, and sought for as such.

Her sagacious counsellors easily foresaw, that the improvement of their own wool was the only effectual means of securing to Britain a superiority in the woollen manufacture over all other nations, and therefore they exerted themselves to the utmost to promote that end.— They were sensible, that so long as England could procure the materials for fine cloth within herself, at thirty or forty per cent. below what

what other nations could obtain it for, her own manufacturers would be always able to secure a superiority over others in every foreign market; and this they knew must ever be the case, so long as other nations resorted to Britain to purchase her wool, loaded with a duty that amounted to that sum: so that, instead of preventing the exportation of her wool, Elizabeth wished to encourage it to the utmost of her power, in a consistency with these views. Accordingly we find it remarked by historians, with a kind of exultation, that, in the year 1551, no less than sixty ships sailed at once from Southampton laden with wool to the Netherlands; and the judicious Camden observes, that in the year 1569, "the two merchant companies of the *Staple* and *Mercant Adventurers* were considerably encreasing in trade, the former in the exportation of our wool, and the latter of our cloth, both to the advancement of the Queen's revenue, and the general prosperity of the nation." So that the *Lanania* that afterwards took possession of the cabinet-council, had not yet begun to appear at court.

In the present situation of things it is plain, that Britain possesses no advantage whatever over the neighbouring nations as to the manufacture of superfine cloths made of Spanish wool. And in consequence of this, have not the French already beat us almost entirely out of our Levant trade; which used to be a most considerable branch of our commerce; and have not the Swedes, Russians, and Prussians, banished our cloths from their dominions, to make room for their own manufactures; which, like ours, are furnished from Spain with materials for their fine cloths, and with their own wools for those of the ordinary sort? In short, to what part of the world does England now export her woollen manufactures in any considerable quantities, unless it be to Scotland, her own colonies in America, and to Spain and Portugal?

* M. Carlier speaks in the following terms of the progress of the French Levant trade. "Avant le commencement de ce siècle la nation Française ne faisoit pas un quart du commerce du Levant en marchandises de draperie. Depuis 1700 jusqu'en 1730, nos ventes ont augmenté considérablement. Nos progrès depuis cette dernière époque ont été si rapides, que nous faisons aujourd'hui plus des deux tiers de ce commerce. Le restant est exploité par les Italiens, les Hollandois, & les Anglois, du côté desquels la balance penchoit encore il y a quarante ans." *Traité des bêtes à laine, p. 623.*

AND

AND what reason has she to rely upon the continuance of these two last markets? Is it not evident, that ever since the accession of the family of Bourbon to the throne of Spain, the French have been particularly favoured at that court; in consequence of which they have had many advantages in trade that other nations do not enjoy? But even without any partial favour, is it not in their power, or in the power of the Dutch, to purchase wool at as reasonable prices in Spain as we can do, and to transport it to some of their manufacturing places at an easier expence? And is it not also very well known, that it can there be manufactured as cheap or cheaper than in Britain even in time of peace?—But in time of war, when we can only obtain this by the intervention of others, the advantage must be much more on their side: so that there is the greatest reason to apprehend that our trade, especially for superfine cloths, to that quarter, will greatly diminish, even without any efforts of Spain herself.

AND who can tell that Spain will always continue in that inactive lethargy which has oppressed her for more than a century past? If she should ever be so wise as to revive her
own

own long-lost woollen manufacture *,—or to load her wool with a duty on exportation, as it is said she proposes to do †; and if she should think fit to favour any other nation more than ourselves,—may we not ask, what in either of these cases would become of the fine woollen manufactures of England?

As to Portugal, it cannot be doubted, but she could easily manufacture her own woollen stuffs, as she neither wants materials nor other conveniencies within herself for this purpose ‡.

And

* In the year 1519, there was a riot of the manufacturers of wool in Spain; which was appeased by giving them liberty to seize one half of the Spanish wool that was to have been exported, and to keep it to themselves at the same price that foreigners were to have paid for it. *Hist. of Com.* p. 349.

When shall Spain be able to boast of an insurrection from a similar cause! When shall she see an insurrection of the lower ranks of her people for *any cause*! A broken and a servile spirit is not an offering that ought ever to be acceptable to any earthly monarch from his subjects. It is to the decrees of *Heaven* alone that the human mind ought to yield a purely passive obedience.

† By a letter from Madrid, of the October 1765, in the public news-papers, it is said, that this plan has been agitated in council.

‡ What the Portuguese *could* do in this way, if they had a mind to it, may be easily learned from what they already *have*

And is it not well known, that the attempts of their present minister to revive these manufactures, have done on a former occasion ; as we learn from a very well informed author.

“ In the year 1681, one *Courteen*, an Irishman, a servant in the family of the then Queen of England, afterwards Queen-dowager, carried over several clothiers and bay-makers into Portugal, where they presently set up the manufactures, both of cloths and bays, particularly at Port Alegre, and Covillhan.

“ It was soon found that the staple of their wool was too short for bays, therefore their bay-makers were dismissed. But they proceeded in their manufacture of cloth ; and soon brought it to such perfection, that, in 1684, either in June or July, upon the Conde d’Ercora’s project to encrease their exportations, and lessen the consumption of foreign manufactures, as well as to encourage their own, the King of Portugal made a sumptuary law to restrain several excesses in the kingdom ; and, among the rest, the importation of all foreign woollen cloths was prohibited.

“ Upon this the foreign merchants in that country made several remonstrances ; but could by no means obtain that the prohibition should be set aside : yet they obtained a year’s time to bring in those that were on the way, but were obliged to reship whatever should arrive after the time limited.” Thus in four years did their woollen manufactures attain to such perfection, as to enable them to dispense with foreign cloths entirely.

“ But the Portuguese went on successful : their manufacture of woollen cloths encreased to that degree, that both Portugal and Brazil were supplied from their own
Vol. II. E fabrics ;

manufactures, have given rise to all those jealousies and complaints of the British merchants in Portugal with which the news-papers have been filled for some time past *? It is indeed doubtful,

“the fabrics; and the materials of this manufacture were
 “their own and Spanish wool, and no other, &c.
 “This was their first essay: but can we be so very
 “fond as to think they would have stopped here? or that
 “they would not have proceeded afterwards to other parts
 “of manufacture? They would have gone on from cloths
 “to druggets, from druggets to serges, and so to other
 “things, till, one after another, at last all foreign wool-
 “len goods would have been prohibited.
 “Mr. Methuen’s treaty, (1707), by taking off the
 “prohibitions of British cloths, and by providing, that nei-
 “ther this, nor any of the British woollen manufactures
 “in Portugal, should be hereafter prohibited, was the
 “immediate ruin of all the fabrics in that country, and
 “opened to us a market, by the *Mercator’s* own showing,
 “for above 10,000 of our cloths, above the value of
 “500,000 l. per annum.” *King’s British Merchant.*

Thus did Portugal, by the spirited exertion of one able minister, (the *Conde d’Ercira*), gain in a few years a perfect knowledge in a principal branch of the woollen manufacture; which they might have possessed, to the infinite emolument of the poor subjects of his Faithful Majesty till this hour, had not the nation, by the death of that patriotic nobleman, lost her best counsellor, and been over-reached by the more able British minister Mr. Methuen.—But should another like *Ercira* arise, have they not still the same means to effectuate the like attempt should it be begun?

* These complaints have now (Nov. 1776) subsided entirely: when the above was written they were very recent.

Probably

ful, if in their present situation they will be able to effect that, or if they will dare to take a step that would so much offend the British court, upon whom they must at present have so much reliance for protection. But as it is ungenerous to take advantage of the weakness of an ally, to force him to accept our manufactures to the detriment of his own subjects; so it is not to be doubted, but some noble minds may feel the indignity, and detest the oppressor,—and, by a noble and well-timed exertion, free themselves from that miserable thralldom into which their own inconsiderate indolence has precipitated them.

Thus it appears, that the woollen manufacture in England is in many respects in a more unstable state than many persons are aware of, which is to be attributed almost entirely to that unwise law that prohibited the exportation of our wool.

Probably this cordiality in Portugal of late with the British merchants, proceeds from a fear of disobliging Britain at present, when she is threatened with a war with Spain. If so, we shall probably have the complaints renewed as soon as their fears on this account shall subside.

It was the consideration of these circumstances that induced me in my last to throw out the hints that alarmed you so much: and as I did not see any probability of obviating these, but by adopting the plan proposed for improving the wool of Scotland; while I was at the same time fully convinced, that in consequence of such steps as have been recommended, vigorously pursued, as fine or finer wool than that of Spain might be produced here in abundance; I concluded, that it was possible the woollen manufacture might come to be adopted, and to flourish, in that part of the island, when it begun to decline in the southern provinces; in the same manner as it has begun to flourish in Yorkshire after it has declined in Middlesex and the adjacent counties.

THE above catalogue of dismal effects that have resulted from the law against the exportation of British wool, is more than sufficient to reprobate it entirely, and ought to induce the legislature to repeal it as soon as possible, were it attended with no other inconveniencies than those already enumerated. Its baneful influence, however, does not rest here: For to it likewise are we indebted for that ruinous trade
called

called *Ouling*, or smuggling of wool from England and Ireland, which has long been practised on a very wide scale, to the inestimable detriment of the nation, notwithstanding the repeated expensive endeavours of government to suppress it.

It has been computed, that 800,000 sacks of wool are thus annually carried out of England and Ireland to France, at a price much below what it could ever have been obtained for, had exportation been legally permitted on the ancient footing: so that their manufactures are supported by our own wool, and they are enabled to rival our manufacturers by the aid they thus obtain *.

How

* When a nation adopts any iniquitous plan, to advance its own prosperity at the expence of others, it is impossible to foresee half the bad effects that may result from it.— It was vainly imagined by some short-sighted politicians, that in consequence of the low price of wool in England that would result from the law prohibiting the exportation of wool, the English manufacturer would be enabled to undersell all others, and would thus obtain a monopoly of the woollen trade to all the world; and it would be no difficult matter to produce many authors who seriously believed in such a visionary project. How different was the result of that experiment! At that time France had almost no woollen manufacture; and it would have been long before she would

How much wiser would it have been to have suffered them to export our wool legally; in return

would have been able to cope with England, had she been obliged to purchase her wools at the former price. But when the prices of wool were so much reduced in England, the French found themselves able to purchase it, by a contraband trade, so much below its old rate, that they were enabled not only to manufacture cloths for themselves, but to export them to others to a great amount. Thus, by endeavouring to grasp too greedily at more than our own, we furnished a weapon to our most dangerous rivals, by the aid of which they were enabled successfully to attack us.

Since the former part of this note was written, I find some persons have a difficulty to comprehend, how it was possible for the French to purchase their wool cheaper after the exportation of our wool was prohibited than before it; as it now must come to them loaded with the whole charge of smuggling, which it is imagined will at least be equal to the former duty on exportation. There are, however, several reasons why they should get it much cheaper than before, and even perhaps cheaper than the British manufacturers themselves.

In the *first* place, As foreign merchants are now excluded from the commerce of wool, it has fallen prodigiously in its price, being at a medium not above half the price it used formerly to be sold at;—so that although France should be at the whole charge of smuggling it, the original purchase is so much below what it formerly was, or ever would have been without that absurd law, that her manufacturers can buy it at home at a much lower price than formerly. But,

Secondly, France does not in reality pay for the charge of smuggling our wool. For by the many prohibitory laws against the commerce of France, our smugglers are ready to run the risk, or at least to meet them half-way, for the profit

turn for which it would have been in the power of the legislature to have accepted of money, or some useful produce we are in need of, instead of those products and manufactures of that country that are by this means poured into Bri-

profit they are enabled to make by the goods they receive in return. And,

Thirdly, As the price of those French goods prohibited by the laws of Britain are prodigiously enhanced in our market above their natural value, a very small quantity of these will amount to a much greater price to the smuggler at home, than the home market price of his wool; so that in this way, by a very advantageous barter, the French may, and I believe really do, get our wool, from Ireland especially, cheaper than the British manufacturers themselves.

It is by attending to circumstances of this sort, that we are enabled to explain many seeming paradoxes in trade; among which the following may be reckoned one.—A very sensible manufacturer lately assured me, that for many years past, English wool of equal fineness may be bought at Amsterdam cheaper than at London; and that he himself would probably have bought it there, and brought it to Scotland, had it not been that the general course of his trade led him more naturally to the London market.—It is thus that Avarice almost always counteracts her own purposes; and our endeavours to obtain an unjust ascendancy over others, for the most part turns out in the end to their emolument, and the detriment of ourselves.—Hoping to obtain an ascendancy over all others by the monopoly of our wool, we have thus essentially hurt our own manufactures, and encouraged those of our rivals, to a degree that no efforts of their own, unaided by our folly, could ever have effected.

tain,

tain, to the unspeakable detriment of our own manufacturers and industrious poor!

It would require a volume to describe *all* the bad effects that result to the nation from this single branch of contraband trade, and would demand a much more masterly pen than mine to paint in proper colours the hurt that the nation sustains by the number of our poor that are thus deprived of bread;—the greater numbers still, whose labours in this way become pernicious instead of being useful to that state to which they belong,—whose morals are so effectually corrupted as to tend to pervert the principles of every other person with whom they may converse;—the swarms of useless drones, who, under the name of *excise* and *custom-house officers*, are appointed to look after that race of banditti, whose morals soon become tainted as well as the others, and who suck out the vitals of their country without benefiting it, or indeed having it in their power to benefit it, in the smallest degree. But these are evils of such a serious nature as must induce every good man to wish, that the only effectual plan for preventing them might quickly be adopted by some wise and truly patriotic legislature.

I HOPE

I HOPE you will excuse me for the freedom with which I have delivered my sentiments on this interesting subject. I should now proceed to take notice of the other objections you have suggested; but this I reserve to my next. Believe me ever to be, &c.

OBSERVATIONS

NATIONAL INDUSTRY

BETTER THIRTIETH

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OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER THIRTEENTH

C O N T E N T S.

Further objections.—Manufactures are cheaper when provisions are dear, than when they are cheap; therefore it is alleged that a cheap country should not be so proper for manufactures as has been pretended.—Answers.—The inference not just.—Necessary distinction between money and riches.—The nature of money defined, and its effects on society pointed out.—The ruinous consequence of too much money in a state, exemplified with regard to manufactures.—Farther illustrated by a review of the present state of Spain.—It is not the plenty of money, but the vigorous exertion of industry among all ranks of people, that constitutes the highest felicity of a state.—In what manner the East-India trade has proved uncommonly beneficial to Britain, —and Europe in general.—Pernicious tendency of paper-money.—Inference.—A country where money is of high value, is much more favourable for manufactures than one where it is low;—hence Scotland than England.—The consequence of a temporary rise in the price of provisions investigated;—proved to be extremely prejudicial to manufactures.—The corn-laws in England, as tending to prevent this, highly commended.—The beneficial consequences that have resulted from thence, illustrated,—by reasoning,—and examples.—Striking contrast between the spirit of the corn-laws, and those with regard to wool.—Our example as to the last followed by France.—The hurtful effects that resulted from thence, remarked by their ministry; and their laws in this respect wisely repealed.—The corn-laws with regard to Scotland iniquitous;—are prejudicial to agriculture;—ought to be repealed, and a more equitable system of legislation adopted in their stead.

the greatest knowledge and learning, and of the truth of the opinion, &c.

OBSERVATIONS

But as I presume this reasoning could have had little effect in convincing you, I would have dissipated it with this single remark, that it might have afforded a striking proof how the natural good tendency may be overruled by the

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

inducement of education, and that it is extremely difficult for those who are in the habit of having been obliged to confine their views to one single object, afterwards to direct themselves to the partial ideas they may have then imaged.

LETTER THIRTEENTH.

circumstances that might affect only themselves, and those genera that operate up

on the whole community. But since it is

TO MR. LONDON.

DEAR SIR,

November 30. 1775

I COULD not help smiling when I read the remarks of your friend the *woollen manufacturer* upon what I had incidentally said of the advantages that Scotland might derive from manufactures on account of the cheapness of living in it. This, I imagined, would have been controverted by no body;—but it appears I have been mistaken; as he attacks that position with

the

the greatest keenness, and seeming conviction of the truth of the opinion he has adopted.

BUT as I presume his reasoning could have had little effect in convincing you, I would have dismissed it with this single remark, That it might have afforded a striking proof how far natural good sense may be over-ruled by the prejudices of education; and that it is extremely difficult for those who in the early part of life have been obliged to confine their views to one single object, afterwards to divest themselves of the partial ideas they may have then imbibed, and to distinguish clearly between particular circumstances that might affect only themselves, and those general laws that operate upon the whole community. But since he has taken the trouble to write out his reasons at full length with his own hand, for my inspection, I find myself bound in good manners to return an answer to them, in the same serious strain that he has proposed them. I really have a very good opinion of his talents and dispositions, although he seems to have been particularly unlucky in adopting this capricious idea. I shall therefore be at some pains to convince his understanding without irritating his passions. Be pleased therefore to communicate to him

him the following answer, which I have written on a separate piece of paper for his perusal.

ALL the arguments employed by your friend may be reduced to this,—"When at any time, from an accidental scarcity, provisions are dear, it is found by experience, that manufactures can be afforded cheaper than usual; and when, on the contrary, there is greater plenty than common, and markets are unusually cheap, the price of manufactures and the wages of workmen rise in proportion.—Hence it is inferred, that manufactures would always be afforded cheaper, if provisions were at all times dear, than if they were constantly cheap*."

BUT although it be granted, that necessity alone induces men to work; and that when people can earn as much in one day as may maintain them for two, or more, they will then be more disposed to indulge their own inclinations, and work less than when the whole labour of

* See Essays on Trade and Commerce, 8vo, printed for Hooper, 1770, in which this position is maintained with much seeming seriousness.

the day is barely sufficient to supply the wants of nature; so that more labourers will be in the market in the last case than in the first; and thus it will be in the power of the employer of these to moderate their wages, if he shall so incline:—yet by no means doth it follow, that the inference drawn from thence is just; as will appear from the following considerations.

MONEY and RICHES have been often confounded as synonymous terms; which has occasioned much confusion in our ideas and mode of reasoning on subjects of this nature.—A man may be called *rich* in any part of the world, who possesses an abundance of those things that minister directly to the necessities and conveniencies of life:—but there are many parts of the earth where heaps of *money*, more than all the world contains, could avail him nothing. The Laplander in the midst of his forests is rich in the possession of numerous herds of Reindeer, although he never saw, nor had any idea of gold or money; while the sooty African, loaded with gold, or trampling upon the sands in which it abounds, is so wretchedly poor, as not to be able to procure the common necessities of life.

THE

THE truth is, money considered in itself is of no value.—But among civilized nations, who have found how convenient it is for facilitating the barter or exchange of one commodity for another, it has received an artificial value.—So that, although useless in itself, it has come to be accepted among all civilized nations *as a token, proving, that the person who is possessed of it, had given something of real value in exchange for it* *; and is on that account accepted of by another in exchange for something that is of real utility and intrinsic worth.

As it is merely in consequence of mutual compact among mankind that money comes to be of any value in any country, any substance may be employed for that use which a number of men may think proper to dignify with this stamp of their authority. Hence in some nations shells, in others glass beads, salt, pepper, cocoa-nuts, or human skulls, &c. have passed current as money. But in all the civilized nations of the world, gold and silver have now,

* I find, that since the above was written, Lord Shelburne expressed my idea with more energy and elegance, when, speaking in the House of Lords, he calls money "*one type of property; Paper (he adds) is another.*"

by common consent, come to be considered as the most proper substances for this purpose, on account of the scarcity, durability, and other singular qualities of these two metals.

WHEN a nation has come to a resolution to accept of either of these metals in exchange for every useful substance they have to dispose of, the quantity of either of these substances that can be given for any useful product, an ox or a sheep, for instance, will be in proportion to the quantity of these precious metals that shall be found in that country; and must encrease or diminish, as the quantity of these metals diminishes or encreases. For the whole of the money in any one nation must be sufficient to purchase all the exchangeable commodities of that country that are in the market at one time*: so that if the quantity of these

* I do not know if the above description of money is sufficiently accurate. To render it more so, let it be observed, that gold and silver, like every other commodity, will fall or rise in its price, according to the quantity that is to be sold, and the demand there is for it. The things with which we purchase gold or silver, are the produce of the soil, manufactures, or any other exchangeable commodity; so that where these metals are scarce, a larger quantity of these commodities must be given for the same weight of metal, than where they are plenty; or, what is the same thing, money will be of greater value.

metals

metals is small in any country, a very little of it will be able to purchase a great quantity of the necessaries of life; and if money abounds much in any place, a much greater quantity will be necessary to be given to procure the same commodities.

HENCE it is evident, that two men inhabiting different countries, which both make use of these metals as a common medium of barter for all commodities, and each of them possessing the same sum of money, or weight of these metals, may be very far from being equally rich; the one being possessed of a sum that is perhaps sufficient to procure all the necessaries and many of the conveniencies, while the other may not have enough to procure the bare necessaries of life alone. So that money and riches are merely relative terms; and although they may in some cases be of equal import, yet as they may be often disjoined, they ought not to be confounded with one another.

SINCE therefore a very small quantity of silver or gold can answer all the ends of money equally well as if it were increased to any assignable degree, it is a matter of no conse-

quence to any nation, whether it is possessed of a great or small quantity of these metals, if we regard only the *internal conveniency* of that state, considered as *altogether unconnected with others*. For if one grain of silver shall be sufficient to procure one day's subsistence for a working man, and will be accepted of by him as full payment for a day's labour, the man who possesses that single grain is virtually as rich as he who should possess a pound of silver, if he lived where that pound of silver could not procure more of the necessaries of life than would subsist a labouring man for one day.

BUT when we come to consider these nations as being connected with others around them by means of commerce, many are the consequences that would result from any considerable variation in this respect; and therefore they deserve to be pointed out with precision.

LET us, by way of example, suppose that there were two neighbouring states, in which the quantity of money in the one was to that in the other, as two to one; so that one piece in the one should be equal to two pieces of the same weight and denomination in the other; which,

which, for the sake of perspicuity, we shall distinguish by the common appellations of *rich* and *poor*.

If the inhabitants of these two countries were to be employed in working up the same sort of manufactures, and were possessed of equal skill and conveniencies for carrying them on, *one* piece of money in the poor country would procure a certain quantity of the raw materials, supposing them of its own produce, equal to that which could be purchased in the other for *two*; and the wages of the labourers employed to manufacture it, would be in the same proportion; so that the piece of work in the one would cost *two* pieces, and that in the other *four*, although confessedly of equal intrinsic value.

LET us now suppose, that the merchants of these two nations should carry their respective manufactures to a common market in a third country;—is it not plain, that the poor nation could there sell its manufacture, and receive a handsome profit upon it, at a price much below the prime cost of the manufacture of the rich country? and, by consequence their merchants would receive large commissions for
more

more goods, so as to give full employment to all its manufacturers, while nobody could afford to purchase the manufactures of the rich country, except the inhabitants of it themselves.

AND would not the inhabitants of the rich country, when they found that the manufactures of their neighbours could be afforded so much cheaper than their own, take every method in their power to obtain these manufactures from them? and although these should be prohibited by law from entering the kingdom, would they not still find admission into the country, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts to the contrary? so that the manufactures of that place would quickly languish, the money would gradually leave the country, and the inhabitants would in a short time become as poor, and as capable of carrying on their manufactures with vigour, as their neighbouring nations; if they should not be so unfortunate as to have a mine of these precious metals within their dominions, which would be a strong bar to their ever having it in their power to experience the happy effects that result from an active national industry.

No

No nation in Europe has been so unhappy as to experience a fate so nearly similar to this, as that of Spain, which, by the discovery of those rich mines in the Western world, that she proudly hoped would make her mistress of the whole world, has been gradually sunk to the lowest pitch of abasement that it is possible to imagine a country possessed of such advantages as she enjoys could ever experience. —Her manufactures, which were in the most flourishing state before that period, are now totally annihilated; —her commerce, which was then considerable, is dwindled into nothing; —her agriculture, which was spirited and vigorous, is entirely neglected; —her cities that then swarmed with millions of inhabitants, now only exhibit the melancholy remains of long lost opulence and splendor*; —her

* The difference between the antient and present state of other places in Spain, may be guessed at from that of Seville; which, according to Ustaritz, at a moderate computation, employed about 60,000 persons in the woollen and silk manufactures, although it now contains only between three and four hundred manufacturers of silk and wool. —His words are as follows.

After having proposed a plan for re-establishing the manufactures, he proceeds to enforce it by the example of what may be done in Seville. “ Mayormente (says he) “ si estendiendo mas el discurso, advertiere, como figuien-

— her people, from possessing that vivifying spirit of liberty that results from universal plenty among all ranks, are now become the abject slaves of tyrannic despots, who alone possess to themselves the little money that flows through that country*.——Dejected and

“ to esta regla se restituirà, v Gr. Sevilla, a su antigua
 “ esplendor, numerosa poblacion, embidiadas riquezas, y
 “ emuladas opulencias, si, en lugar de los 300 u 400 te-
 “ lares de seda y lana, a que se hallan reducidos, se reta-
 “ bleciessen hasta el numero de 16,000 a que llegaron, y
 “ en que se conservaron muchas annos (segun assegura en
 “ sus representaciones la misma ciudad) los quales, siendo
 “ de texidos exquisitos, y ordinarios, ocuparon tres perso-
 “ nas a lo menos, uno con otro, haciendo en todo 48,000
 “ operarios, comprehendidos los que preparan la lana,
 “ seda, oro, y plata, y con las familias de algunas casados
 “ passaran de 60,000 personas.” *Ust. th. y. Prat. de Com.*
Ec. p. 11.

And again, speaking of the ruin that is occasioned by the tax called *alcavala*, he mentions this city in the following terms. “ En cuya comprobacion no puedo dexar de espe-
 “ cificar el exemplar de Sevilla, cuyos fabricantes de seda,
 “ por medio de su Alcalde Alami y Veedores, siguieron
 “ pleyte el anno de 1722, anté el superintendente de aquel
 “ reynado, alegando lo destruidos que se hallaban, sus
 “ maniobras reducidas ya a menos de 100 telares,” &c.
Ib. p. 321. ch. 96.

* Should it be told, That Spain is poor, and money there of nearly as high value as in any other couuntry in Europe, and that therefore the position in the text cannot be just; I answer, It is true, the present poverty of Spain arises from the

and spiritless, they either drawl out an insipid inactive existence, or fly to those unhappy regions, the source of all their woes, there to dig treasures that they can never enjoy, which tend to enrich other more fortunate countries.

FROM the above induction, it appears, that in consequence of the advantages that a cheap country enjoys, with regard to manufactures, if the inhabitants are not wanting in their own endeavours, every individual in the nation may find sufficient employment at all times, and thereby earn a comfortable subsistence to himself and family; so that poverty will not be known in the land: and as money will thus flow in upon it from every quarter, in a short time it will become as plenty there, and

the want of manufactures; but these manufactures were ruined by the causes assigned in the text, and the unequal division of property that began to take place after the discovery of the new world.

When money can be obtained in great quantities by little labour, the slower and better means of obtaining it by manufactures and industry will always be neglected. Corruption, with all its dreadful train of ills, immediately follows; the bulk of the people become sunk in indolence and misery, and a few riot in all the excess of dissipation and extravagance.

of

of as little value, as in the neighbouring nations around it; after which time that country will possess no advantages in this respect over others, and must then be contented with its own proportion only of manufactures, without any hope of being able to outdo all its rivals in foreign markets.

THUS hath heaven planted unsurmountable barriers to the ambition of man, and hath said to the ambition of princes, and the immeasurable pride of nations, as well as to the raging of the ocean,—*Hither shalt thou come, and here shall all thy vain efforts be staid.*

It thus appears, that it is not the abundance of *money* that constitutes the supreme felicity of a nation, but the abundance of *labour* in it, and the activity of *all* its inhabitants, arising from a constant and steady demand for the several manufactures about which they are employed;—that so long as this continues to be the case, whatever be the quantity of *money* in the nation at the time, every person in it will be easy in his circumstances, and happy in the enjoyment of the good things

things of this life*;—that while the nation possesses a smaller quantity of money than its neighbours, its manufactures may continue to flourish in a high degree; but that they must naturally decline, if ever the value of money there comes to be lower than among the neighbouring nations, were it not for other circumstances that sometimes counterbalance this one;—that flourishing manufactures, and a gainful trade, by throwing the balance in favour of that people, will naturally encrease the quantity of money in it, and lower its value, and, if not checked in time, would at length destroy the manufactures of that country, and render the *people* in the first place miserable, and end in the utter ruin of the state;—after which it may again revive, flourish, and decline by another similar revolution.

SUCH are the changes to which all sub-lunary things must be continually exposed.

* It is here to be observed, that I all along suppose the nation alluded to is capable of producing the necessaries of life, particularly provisions within itself. The case would evidently differ much, if it were obliged to purchase them from another country.

THE real patriot, therefore, who wishes to promote to the highest degree the prosperity of his country, and the felicity of his fellow-subjects, which to him are synonymous terms, will not so much aim at filling the nation with unavailing heaps of splendid ore, as at preserving the country as long as possible in such a state as promises best to promote the industry and activity of the people. And as he knows that if all the money that comes into the nation by a continually gainful trade should be accumulated there, it must at length frustrate his aim;—he will be well pleased to see some channel opened by which the superabundance of it may flow out again; and will be exceedingly happy if he discovers a mean by which this can be effected without corrupting the morals of the people; which luxury, the most necessary attendant of too much money, and the most obvious mean of dissipating it, has a powerful tendency to do.

CONSIDERED in this point of view, the East-India trade may be looked upon as of some utility to Britain and the other industrious nations in Europe, by having opened a channel through which the superfluous money obtained

obtained by our gainful trade with other European states may freely be emitted, there to be buried, never more, we hope, to return. By this means the inconveniencies that must have resulted from the vast influx of the precious metals into Europe since the discovery of the new world, have in a great measure been obviated.

THE great Montesquieu foresaw, and accurately pointed out, the bad effects that must have resulted to Spain, and he might have added other manufacturing nations in Europe, from the accumulation of money that was to be expected would ensue from this cause:— but he did not foresee, that this outlet for it would be opened; by means of which many of *these* bad effects have been prevented*.

THE

* Considered in this light also, the vast sums of money that have been expended in Germany by our many expensive wars on the continent, will not perhaps appear to be so detrimental to the country as is commonly imagined; seeing it does not tend in the smallest degree to interrupt our manufactures, and the general industry of the nation; but, on the contrary, to promote both of these in a considerable degree, by tending to keep the value of money higher here than it otherwise would have been, while at the same time it
 augments

THE ideas here suggested concerning the influence of trade, are so contrary to those usually entertained on that subject, that it may be necessary to illustrate them a little further by some examples, to prevent them from being looked upon as fanciful paradoxes.

It is commonly imagined, that every trade is gainful to a nation that brings in a balance of money to that nation; and the value of such a trade is always estimated by the sums of money that it receives in balance. This, however, I consider as a fallacious mode of reasoning. For if it be allowed, that the numbers of people constitute the real strength of every state, it will be acknowledged, that

augments the specie, and diminishes its value in the neighbouring states.

This, you will say, is a very unusual way of estimating the benefits of commerce. It is so: but it is also sufficiently evident, from the principles above explained, that a nation which has a gainful commerce, must soon have its manufactures entirely ruined, were it not for some such outlets as these, or for luxury, which must for want of these gain footing, and draw off the superfluous money that it possesses. But as luxury has a natural tendency to enervate the body, and corrupt the heart, any other method of effecting the same end ought to be adopted in preference to it.

that

that strength can only be augmented by such means as tend to promote the vigour and energy, the happiness, and consequent fecundity of these people. Every aim of sound policy therefore ought to be directed towards that end.—Commerce,—manufactures,—even agriculture herself, were it possible to suppose a case in which it could happen, become pernicious the moment they do not tend to contribute to that ultimate aim of political wisdom.

BUT if a gainful commerce could be supposed to continue without interruption for any great length of time;—if the balance of trade continued to flow constantly in favour of that nation, money would quickly become of so little value, as to enhance the price of every article of life, and of every manufacture, to such a degree as would tend to retard the exports of manufactures of every sort, which would affect the whole body of manufacturers.—Foreign goods would then force themselves into the country in spite of the severest laws that could be made against them; and thus the poor of every denomination would be thrown out of employment, and by consequence

sequence become idle, graceless, and miserable.

STILL, however, the merchants, by pushing on trade to a great degree ; by importing and re-exporting, might continue to bring vast sums of money into the nation, and accumulate riches to an astonishing degree,—while the people,—the only true riches of the state, were reduced to misery.

SUCH, in all probability, was the state of ancient Tyre. Such for certain was the state of Carthage, which, from this mistaken idea, that riches could constitute the strength of a state, suffered her *merchants* to be exalted to the highest degree, while her *people* were miserable slaves. But when the trying hour of danger came,—when she was surrounded with difficulties on every side,—she felt her internal weakness :—her own people deserted their oppressors, and assisted the victorious foe ;—her mercenaries forsook her and fled ;—and she felt, when too late, that she had trusted to a pointed rod, which, when she was obliged to lean upon it for support, pierced her to the heart, and made her fall like a mighty monument erected by folly upon the unstable.

stable sand, which, when it was fiercely assailed, tumbled headlong a stupenduous ruin, the wonder and astonishment of all surrounding nations.

LET us not therefore deceive ourselves by false appearances.—A nation may carry on a gainful trade, while its strength and vigour are declining.—Its merchants may be enriched, while the state becomes nerveless and exhausted.—Its great men may be wallowing in luxury, while slavery approaches with hasty strides; or may be intoxicated in the giddy whirl of varied amusements and refined delights, when it stands tottering on the very brink of destruction.

SINCE then too great an abundance of money has such a naturally pernicious tendency on a manufacturing country, what can we say as to the wisdom of those, who, not content with the sums of money that flow into the nation by means of its trade, endeavour to encrease the bad effects of a superabundance of it, by creating an imaginary money; which, by answering the same purposes as *real money within the nation*, produces mischiefs of

the same kind that it would occasion, without being accompanied with all its beneficial effects? For being created without almost any effort, it does not promote the industry of the people;—and by lowering the value of money, tends, as far as its influence can reach, to retard its manufactures.

You will easily perceive I here speak of *paper-money*, which in one sense may be viewed as a mine of gold or silver discovered by some person in the country, that could be wrought without almost any labour or expence. It may serve indeed to enrich a few individuals who have made the discovery, while it hurts the country at large, and impoverishes in so far every person who has no immediate concern in the undertaking. A country may be ruined,—but seldom can be improved by this means.—How cautious therefore ought a poor nation to be of adopting this specious but dangerous mode of improvement! Like a dram of strong spirits to a man of a broken constitution, and vitiated palate, it may seem agreeable at first, and afford a temporary flush of vigour that may be mistaken for returning strength, while it only tends

LET. X.

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tends to hasten that fatal catastrophe that it was meant to prevent*.

I HOPE

* Some people understand by the phrase *paper-money*, all bills, bonds, and every other writing containing an acknowledgment of debt due by one person to another.—But this is by no means the sense I wish it to bear in the text.—For as such acknowledgments of debt do not perform the functions of money, and are only a commodious mean of transferring that or other property from one person to another, they may be increased in a nation almost to any degree, without affecting the value of silver or gold in the least.—It is perhaps because *paper-money* is sometimes issued in the form of bills that these have been confounded.

Paper-money then, in the strict and proper meaning of the phrase, can only be applied to denote those pieces of paper which are stamped by the authority of the legislature of any kingdom, and, without bearing interest, or being payable on demand, are ordered to pass current, as of equal value with certain pieces of real money of gold or silver of a known weight and denomination;—and which are by the authority of the same legislature declared to be a legal tender of payment on all occasions, for the sums they respectively represent. These pieces of paper in that case assume the province of current coin within the districts subjected to that legislature; and are therefore in strict propriety entitled to the name of *paper-money*. The provinces of America have afforded several instances of this kind of coinage, by which they would have been totally ruined, if not prevented by the timely interference of the mother-country.

The immediate consequence of a plentiful coinage of this paper-cash is, that the current specie in the country is much augmented, and by consequence its value is proportionally diminished.—Home manufactures, and the native products of the country, are thus rendered dearer than former-

I HOPE these observations will satisfy your friend, that a country in which money is scarce,

ly; and foreign goods, retaining the same nominal value, become therefore cheaper; by which means the national industry receives a check, and foreign industry is encouraged.—On this account the *real* coin is gradually drawn out of the country to pay for these foreign commodities; so that in a short time, if not prevented, little but the paper will remain. When this comes to be the case, *real* specie comes to be in such request, that no one who has it will part with it for paper-money of the same denomination, unless he gets a premium for it. In this manner the value of the paper-money comes gradually to decrease; and will continue to fall at length almost to nothing at all, unless some measures are taken to guard against it. And as the persons who hold that paper-money at the time that it decreases in value, lose the whole of that decrease, the public are thus gradually cheated out of their property; but as this may come by slow and imperceptible degrees, they often feel the pressure of the ills that it occasions before they are sensible of the cause from whence it proceeds.

Such a coinage, therefore, although it serves to fill the coffers of those who issue it, and gives a temporary flush of money to all ranks of people, becomes in the end exceedingly pernicious to the state.—It is exactly similar in its effects to those reductions of the weight or fineness of the coin, by means of which the needy monarchs of Europe used in former times to fill their coffers without the knowledge of their subjects; with this additional inconvenience, however, that by an artful management, the bad effects of the paper-money may be longer concealed, and by consequence must convulse the state to a much higher degree when it comes to be discovered.

The notes issued by our banks in Scotland are not in strict propriety entitled to the name of *paper-money*, although they are

scarce, and therefore of great value, possesses many real and incontestable advantages for carrying

are so in part. For as these notes are payable upon demand, there is a necessity of keeping a quantity of specie at the several bank-offices always in readiness to pay these when presented; so that if the notes issued never exceeded the cash on hand, they would be strictly banks of deposit, like that of Amsterdam, and could not affect the value of cash in the smallest degree. They would only differ from foreign banks of deposit, in that these admit of transfers only in their books, whereas with us these transfers are made by exchanging their notes. Bills and bonds of every denomination, it is plain, are all only means of transferring funds actually deposited.

But in so far as our banks issue notes to a greater amount than the cash they keep on hand, their notes resemble paper-money, and are attended with advantages and disadvantages of the same kind with legal paper-money, although in a lesser degree.

For if, by issuing a great number of notes, any bank should sensibly lower the value of money within the reach of their circulation, so as to make cash begin to be scarce in that part of the country; as soon as people found difficulty in getting cash for these notes from other persons, they would be obliged to bring them to the bank-office; and this would subject the bank-directors to the necessity of bringing cash from other places to answer this demand upon them; which would be attended with so much expence as could not fail soon to induce the bankers to suppress many of their notes, so as to bring themselves nearer to the state of a bank of deposit. Neither is it possible for their notes ever to sink in value, unless the company shall fail entirely; so that it is impossible for this kind of paper-money ever to be attended with such baneful influences as the other.

It

carrying on manufactures, over another where it abounds more, and where the necessaries of life

It operates, nevertheless, in the very same manner, and unless managed with great caution, produces effects that distress the society in a very sensible degree. For, while cash happens to be plenty in the country, there is no difficulty of issuing notes to a much greater value than the cash on hand; which notes may be kept in the circulation a long time without returning to the bank. And as this is an apparent advantage to the undertakers, short-sighted managers may misjudge the matter so far as to endeavour to push the circulation of their notes as much as they can. By this means the country experiences a sort of glut of money, which soon lowers its value, and drains off the specie. The inconveniencies that this produces are first felt by the bank itself, which soon finds itself under the necessity of quickly calling in almost all its notes; and the vacuum that this occasions in the circulation, and in the supposed capital of many individuals, is attended with the most serious and destructive consequences.

The issuing of notes, therefore, although of immediate apparent advantage to a banking-company themselves, whenever it exceeds the cash on hand, immediately operates as *paper-money*, and becomes hurtful to the state in proportion to its amount. But as it is not safe for the bankers themselves to push this very far, the general hurt to the state by this means, unless on extraordinary emergencies, cannot be very considerable.

But as this is not the only, nor perhaps the most profitable branch of the banking-business, it ought by no means to be implied, that I look upon banks as useless to a country. These companies, by facilitating the operations of *exchange*,—by discounting bills,—by granting credits with judgment, &c.—procure for individuals such an entire command of their

life cannot be procured at such a moderate price. On which account it will be allowed, that the northern parts of Scotland are more favourable for manufactures than any part of England. But lest he should think that I have not taken a proper notice of the objection he has made, the following observations are added, to afford him further satisfaction with regard to that particular.

It has been already observed, that a temporary rise in the price of provisions in any country, must naturally produce a greater degree of industry among the labouring people, —and that a temporary fall in this respect must as necessarily produce a contrary effect. But if this advanced price was to be long continued, the labourers finding themselves too much straitened in their circumstances, would either insist upon having more wages, or they would leave that country, where

their own funds, as facilitates the operations of manufactures and commerce in a surprising degree.—On these accounts every attentive person must be sensible, that, when under judicious management, *banks* are always attended with very great benefits to those places in which they are established.

This explanation I thought necessary, lest what is said in the text might have been misunderstood.

they

they could not earn a comfortable subsistence, and seek their fortune in foreign regions.

THIS is supposing the master-manufacturers had entered into an iniquitous combination among themselves, not to raise the wages of their labourers on any account; and should prove such staunch friends to one another, as to adhere strictly to such a resolution.— But to the glory of humanity, and happiness of mankind in general, it may be observed, that such iniquitous associations never were, or ever will be lasting. When the master-manufacturer and merchant reap great profits, it will be impossible for some worthy man among them to see his labourers in misery and want, and not minister to their relief by a small augmentation of their wages. But if this should not be the case, is it to be doubted but that other men, seeing the great profits that was made by these people, would wish to share in these profits, and by engaging in this business, outbid the old manufacturers to procure labourers to themselves? and as every man wishes to have as large a share as possible of a gainful trade, the wages would be gradually

ally raised by a competition with one another, to as great a height as the profits of the business would admit of.

IN this manner does every temporary scarcity produce a momentary profit to the master-manufacturers, and a lasting detriment to themselves and the nation in general; for if the prices of work are once raised, it is acknowledged that they must be rather further augmented than lowered when plenty comes. On which account it becomes necessary to advance the price of the manufactures in foreign markets; which slackens the demand for them, and is the cause of much uneasiness, that often ends in tumults and bloodshed at home, before a proper remedy can be applied.

To avoid these evils, it ought to be the study of every wise and humane legislature, to provide with the most cautious foresight against any considerable variation in the price of the most necessary articles of life for the labouring poor,—but above all in the price of bread-corn, which is with justice emphatically styled *the staff of life*.

NOR

NOR can any nation produce a system of legislation equal to that of Great Britain in this respect. A system that has been pursued for some time past with a steadiness that does honour to the discernment of the supreme council of the nation, notwithstanding the futile declamations of narrow-sighted politicians, who are continually inveighing against the bounty for exportation, and the other corn-laws in force at present, as the cause of almost every misfortune of the nation: yet true it is, that Britain does not possess such a decided advantage over the nations around her in any other respect, as in what relates to her corn-laws; nor has perhaps any other circumstance contributed so much to her prosperity for a century past as this has done.

It has been already showed, that if we wish to secure our manufactures in a flourishing state, it is absolutely necessary that bread-corn, and the other necessaries of life, should be at all times in such abundance in the country, as to be afforded to the manufacturer at a price so moderate as to be always within his reach; and the less variation there is in this respect, so much the better. But in what manner

manner could these purposes be effectuated near so well, as by allowing a bounty for exportation when the price is too low, and admitting of an importation when it is too high?

It has been already said, that agriculture, like every other manufacture; can only flourish when there is a constant and a steady market for its products. By means of these laws, no man is afraid of ever overstocking the market. —He is sure of always getting his whole crop sold at a moderate price, and therefore exerts himself to the utmost of his power to rear as extensive and as weighty crops as possible. And is not the perpetual abundance in the nation that is produced by this means, the best security that the manufacturer can ever have, that he can never experience a severe scarcity?

BUT were the farmer either prevented from exporting when prices were moderate, or deprived of the bounty when very low, what would be the consequence? —When a crop was abundant, the whole people in the country could not consume nearly the whole quantity of grain produced; —the markets would be

be overstocked;—the farmer could not sell his grain;—the prices of course would be exceedingly reduced;—manufacturers would turn idle and insolent;—commissions from abroad could not be executed in a proper time by our manufacturers;—and foreign merchants would be obliged to apply to other markets for these goods;—farmers would be unable to pay their rents;—proprietors would be distressed for want of these, and the whole nation would be thrown into the most violent ferment that could be imagined.—But the evil does not rest here.

WHEN the farmer experienced such grievous distress from a glut of the market with corn,—it is not to be imagined that he would proceed with alacrity in his preparations for another crop. Timid and irresolute, his labours would be feeble, and he would even wish that succeeding crops should not be so abundant. In these circumstances little grain would be sowed, and the ground for that little imperfectly prepared; so that whatever season followed, the crop could not be abundant; but if the season should prove unfavourable, half the quantity of grain that was necessary for the sustenance
of

of the inhabitants would not be produced, and inevitable famine must be the consequence.

It is unnecessary to paint the cruel distress that must attend such a calamity;—but this calamity in these circumstances would be unavoidable. Thus prices fluctuating perpetually from one extreme to another,—the farmers and other labourers would be alternately involved in the most abject poverty, or wallowing in destructive plenty. Nor would it be possible to carry on any considerable manufacture in a nation so circumstanced as this.

SUCH, however, was the miserable state of Britain for many ages before these salutary laws were enacted; and such, in some measure, at present is the state of some modern nations, which hardly stand in need of any other circumstance, but a steady adherence to such a system of legislation, to outrival us in almost every branch of manufactures. In these unhappy times it was no unusual thing for the price of grain to be ten times as high at one time as it had been only a few months before, —and sometimes thirty or forty times the price
that

that it usually sells for at present*; whereas now the greatest variation that is ever experienced, hardly at any time amounts to one third of its usual price.

MIGHT not the British nation of old be with propriety compared in this respect to a mill that

* The assertion in the text may perhaps appear so extraordinary, as to require a particular illustration. The following facts, selected from many others of the same sort that may be seen in Fleetwood's *Chronicon pretiosum*, will, I hope, prove satisfactory.

In the year 1316 wheat fell from 4l. to 6s. 8d. per quarter; i. e. to one twelfth of the price it bore within a few months;—and this 6s. 8d. was above three times its usual selling-price at that time.

Again, anno 1361 wheat was sold at 2s. per quarter, although in 1359 it was so high as 1l. 6s. 8d.; which is more than thirteen times the former price.

And so late as anno 1557, wheat before harvest sold for 2l. 13s. 4d.; and after harvest for 8s. per quarter.

In the year 1455, wheat sold for 1s. 2d. per quarter; in 1434, for 1l. 6s. 8d.; in 1387, for 2s.—1316, 4l.;—1288, at 8d.;—and in 1269, at 6l. 8s. 4d. per quarter. Thus the prices were at one time 193 times more than at another;—and if allowance is made between the weight of the shilling in the year 1455 from what it was in the year 1269, as appears by the table in the appendix, it will be found, that the 6l. 8s. 4d. at the last period, contained as much silver as nearly two hundred shillings at the former; so that the quarter of wheat was really at one time near three hundred times the price that it cost at the other. What would be

that had been erected by an ignorant mechanic upon the principal bed of a mountain-stream, without either reservoir or sluices, that was useless one part of the year on account of the want of water, occasioned by the summer heats,—and at other times of the year could be of as little utility by reason of the prodigious superabundance of water; so that the inhabitants could only be benefited by it for a few days in the year, and these so uncertain, as to make it be almost entirely deserted? whereas now it resembles a mill constructed by a skilful architect upon the banks of a copious river, which never wants a sufficiency of water to keep it going even in the driest weather in summer, and, by means of sluices properly contrived, never admits more water than is beneficial for the mill at any time; a proper outlet being contrived, by which the superfluous water is at all

be the dreadful consequences if the variations in this article should be in any respect approaching to this at present!

By the same table it appears, that the 6l. 8s. 4d. in the year 1269, contained as great a weight of silver, as about 20l. Sterling at present; and if it be supposed that the value of money was at that time only three times what it is now,—a quarter of wheat would then cost a sum equal to 60l. now.—But the medium-price of wheat now does not exceed 30s. or 31s. per quarter; so that the price was sometimes forty times more than the usual price of this necessary article of life in our days.

times

times thrown off with facility, so as never to interrupt in any degree the operations of the mill. Thus abundance without superfluity is at all times secured to the inhabitants, and they are permitted to carry on every domestic employment with tranquillity and ease*.

It was from the contemplation of these beneficial consequences that have accrued to Britain from the influence of our corn-laws, that I was induced to bestow the high encomiums I formerly did upon the wisdom that influenced the supreme council of our nation with respect to this subject. Nor could I help remarking with some sort of amazement, that the same body of men should have adopted a spirit of legislation so diametrically opposite to this with regard to our wool, and should have so long persisted in it in spite of the experience they had had of the beneficial effects of the one, as well as the baneful consequences that have resulted from the other.

THE mind of Lewis XIV. of France was too narrow to be able to grasp the great idea that

* See this subject more fully discussed in the Postscript to this letter.

animated

animated them in the first instance; but their conduct in the other respect was perfectly adapted to the meanness of his understanding; so that he imitated them in this particular in many of his edicts.—Among others, the owners of flocks in France were restricted from selling their wool to any others than the manufacturers in their neighbourhood. The consequence of which was, that the wool-growers neglecting that branch of culture, wool became scarce and dear, which in the end entirely ruined the manufactures of several places in Picardy, Artois, Hainault, French Flanders, &c.*.—And other restrictions of the same

* “ La qualité des étoffes est assez ordinairement déterminée par la nature des laines qu’on recueille dans les provinces où elles existent. Il y a toujours moins de profit & de commodité à employer des laines étrangères que celles des lieux. On évite par-là les frais de transport, & on a l’avantage en tirant de la première main, de prévenir les fraudes que les circulateurs & les entremitteurs ont coutume de faire pour donner le change aux acheteurs.

“ Cette vérité a été tellement reconnue, qu’on en a voulu faire une loi. Il y a des réglemens qui défendent aux propriétaires des troupeaux de vendre leurs laines à d’autres entrepreneurs, que ceux des manufactures voisines de leur résidence.

“ Tant que la contrainte n’a pas suivi cette disposition, l’intérêt commun du cultivateur & du fabricant en devenoit

same sort were producing similar effects in other parts of the country, till the ministry of late

“ montroit l'utilité, & en assûroit l'exécution. Mais
 “ dès qu'on en eût fait une règle de conduite, dont on ne
 “ pouvoit plus s'écarter sans encourir des peines, le cultiva-
 “ teur entra en défiance, & crût qu'on vouloit faire pen-
 “ cher la balance du côté du marchand, & le favoriser à
 “ son préjudice. L'effet de ce règlement fût contraire à
 “ celui qu'on croyoit pouvoir en attendre.

“ La matière première devenant plus rare & plus chère,
 “ nombre d'entrepreneurs furent obligés de quitter la par-
 “ tie, & de se livrer à d'autres genres d'occupation. Cet-
 “ te espèce de révolution a causé la ruine de bien des atte-
 “ liers qui existoient à la fin du siècle passé dans la Picardie,
 “ dans l'Artois, dans le Haynault, et dans la Flandre Fran-
 “ çoise.” *Traité des bêtes à laine*, p. 817.

Again, he observes to the same effect, p. 695. when speaking of the manufacture of tennies at Mans in the province of Maine. “ La laine qu'on payoit dixhuit à
 “ vingt sols, vaut presentement trente cinq à quarante
 “ sols & plus; la hausse de ce prix vient de la rareté de la
 “ matière, met le manufacturier dans la nécessité de vendre
 “ son étoffe plus chère, &c.

“ Après l'année 1749, où l'introduction des laines étran-
 “ gères fut permis par les arrêts des 12^{me} Novembre &
 “ 9^{me} Decembre de la même année, qui exemptèrent de
 “ tous droits les matières premières venant de l'étranger,
 “ on fit entrer dans la Mainé beaucoup de laines de Barbarie,
 “ qui revenoient à très bon compte.

“ Mais il arriva qu'en alimentant des laines du Levant
 “ les manufactures, on laissa aux cultivateurs celles dont
 “ ils avoient eu jusques-là un débit réglé & assuré, ce qui
 “ les obligea à ne plus penser qu'aux deux objets de la bou-
 “ cherie & du fumier, et leur fit négliger le soin de la
 “ laine.

“ L'étranger

late perceived the error of their predecessors, and by repealing these restrictive edicts in many instances *, have brought the manufactures

“ L'étranger s'appervant que l'étoffe n'avoit plus la même finesse, & la même bonté, cessa d'en tirer la même quantité.

“ Il paroît que ce temps est l'époque du découragement des cultivateurs, & d'un changement prejudicable à la propagation des bonnes especes, dont la diminution emporte nécessairement le rencherissement des bonnes laines.”

This is a case so parallel to that of England, and its effects have been so similar to what has been experienced there, that I could not refuse myself the pleasure of quoting it.

* After having told that the province of Roussillon was in the custom of carrying on a considerable commerce with Spain for the sale of fatted sheep, Mr. Carlier observes, that “ ce commerce fut interrompu en 1711 à l'occasion d'une mortalité de bestiaux, qui desola le Roussillon, & les autres provinces du royaume. On crût alors que la conservation des especes demandoit qu'on en défendit l'exportation chez l'étranger. Un arrêt du conseil du 15me Juin 1711 porte cette défense sous des peines rigoureuses. La prohibition fut confirmée d'année en année jusqu'en 1717.

“ La France ayant été affligée d'une autre epidémie générale en 1740, on eut recours au même expédient. Le conseil rendit le 7me Juin de cette même année un arrêt, qui défendoit la sortie & la vente du bétail hors du royaume, sous peine de confiscation, & de trois mille livres d'amende.

“ Cet état de prohibition subsistoit encore vingt ans après : & le Roussillon en souffroit plus qu'aucune autre province,

factures of France to a much more flourishing state than most of the subjects of Britain would be

“ étant privé par là de débouchés pour le commerce de ses
 “ troupeaux d’engrais. Les cultivateurs, n’ayant d’autre
 “ ressource que les boucheries du pays pour la vente du
 “ gras, prenoient le parti de faire passer leurs bestiaux en
 “ fraude dans les provinces frontiers d’Espagne, où ils ven-
 “ doient plus avantageusement.

“ Une saisie de trois mille moutons, qui fut faite en
 “ 1762 sur des pâtures qui traversoient les montagnes pour
 “ arriver en Espagne, donna lieu au conseil de connoître, que
 “ le reglement rendu en 1740 dans la circonstance de l’épi-
 “ démie auroit dû être révoqué après la cessation de ce
 “ fléau, parce que le meilleur moyen de réparer les pertes
 “ de ce genre, est de laisser aux cultivateurs la liberté des
 “ remplacement, & de les encourager par l’espoir d’une vente
 “ avantageuse, soit à l’étranger, soit aux régnicoles, ce qui
 “ ne peut avoir lieu dans l’état de prohibition qui prive le
 “ colon de la facilité de tirer le meilleur parti de ses pro-
 “ ductions.

“ Ces considérations déterminèrent le conseil à rendre un
 “ arrêt le 17me Aout 1763, par lequel il est ordonné qu’à
 “ l’avenir les bestiaux pourront librement sortir à l’étranger
 “ & venir de l’étranger dans le royaume, en payant seule-
 “ ment pour tous droits, tant à la sortie, qu’à la rentrée,
 “ un demi pour cent de valeur ; les déclarant au surplus
 “ exempts de tous droits de la circulation dans les différentes
 “ provinces du royaume. Et à fin d’éviter les difficultés
 “ qu’une évaluation arbitraire pourroit faire naître dans les
 “ bureaux des frontiers, le Roi fixé par le même arrêt la
 “ valeur & le droit de chaque espece.

“ Ce reglement produisit l’effet le plus avantageux dans
 “ toutes les provinces du royaume. Les choses changerent
 “ bientôt de face dans le Roussillon. L’ancien commerce
 “ reprit vigueur, & reparut avec plus d’activité que par le
 “ passé,

be willing to admit of*. And if they should at length adopt, and steadily adhere to our system of corn-laws, every thing is to be feared from that potent rival in manufactures, if we do not strenuously exert ourselves, so as to neglect

“ passé, à cause de la modicité des droits, dont la fixation
 “ sur le pied de la valeur des pieces de bétail ne dépendoit
 “ plus de l'idée des préposés aux bureaux de sortie. A la
 “ fin de l'année 1766 on faisoit état dans un seul bureau de
 “ sortie de vingt-quatre mille bêtes exportées à l'étranger.”
Traité des bêtes à laine, p. 597.

• “ Les draps noirs de Sedan l'emportent presentement
 “ en finesse sur ceux qui sortent des premiers ateliers d'An-
 “ gleterre et de Hollande.” *Ib. p. 745.*

“ Le commerce des seuls draps Londrins exportés dans
 “ le Levant produisent annuellement aux negocians du Lan-
 “ guedoc pour plus de vingt millions d'affaires.” *Ib. p.*
 844.—If by *affaires* here is meant *livres*, the amount is
 near 1,000,000*l.* Sterling for *draps Londrins* alone exported
 annually from Languedoc.

We learn from the same author, that, in the year 1766,
 Sedan, and the places depending on it, employed 979 cloth-
 weavers, and fifty-six looms for serges; and that the ma-
 nufactures of that place were that year valued at 6,279,578
 livres; and that, in the year 1767, they were valued at

		<i>Livres</i> 6,952,574
Reims manufactured goods that year,	{	6,800,024
valued at		
Chalons in the same year,	-	562,184
Troyes in the year 1766,	-	2,400,783
Rhetel, in the year 1767,	-	218,188

Total amount of the manufactures in Normandy, 16,933,753
 In

glect none of those advantages that Heaven has given us over them.

IF

In the générality of Rowen, comprehending the capital, Elbeuf, Louviers, Andelis, &c. *année commune*,

		<i>Liures.</i>
18 a 1900 draps, valant pres de	- -	7,000,000
3500 a 4000 pieces espagnolottes, 1,200 a		1,500,000
4000 a 4500 p. de flanelle,	360 a	400,000
5000 p. de frocs,	- - -	500,000
480 a 500 pinchinats,	- 125 a	130,000
450 a 500 ratines,	- 230 a	260,000
250 a 260 serges,	- 23 a -	24,000

Dans le generalité de Caen,

11 a 1200 draps,	- - 8 a -	900,000
7 a 8000 pieces d'estoffes,	- - - -	600,000

Dans le generalité d'Alençon,

600 pieces de draps,	- - - -	72,000
38 a 40,000 pieces d'estoffes, valant,	-	2,300,000

Total in the generality of Rowen,	}	13,686,000
Alençon, and Caen,		
In Normandy,		
		16,933,753
		30,619,753

Thus do the woollen manufactures in this very small district of France amount annually to the value of nearly 1,500,000l. Sterling.

This author concludes his review of the woollen manufactures of France with this remark.

“ A l'avenement de M. Colbert au ministère, il sortoit de France, *année commune*, pres de quatre-vingt millions, d'aujourd'hui, qu'on payoit à l'industrie de l'étranger en emplettes de draps fine & de plusieurs sortes d'étoffes.

A la

IF France and England, in some instances, have hurt their manufactures, by endeavouring to give them an undue ascendancy over the interests of agriculture,—I should be sorry to think, that the gentlemen of Scotland should come to hurt the interests of agriculture in this

A la fin de l'administration de M. Trudaine, on faisoit état de cent soixante dix mille pieces de draps sortant annuellement des manufactures de France, évaluées à vingt-huit ou vingt-neuf millions, & de 760 a 770 pieces de toutes sortes d'étoffes, valant 54 a 55,000,000, ce qui donne un produit total de 82 a 84,000,000,—"or about 4,000,000*l.* Sterling, which France now annually gains by her woollen manufacture.

"Ce calcul est independent du prix des étoffes communes à l'usage du bas peuple, que les ménagers & les gens de campagne ont l'habitude de faire fabriquer par des tisserands, auxquels ils livrent la matiere premiere."

Thus it appears that France, in less than a hundred years, has improved her woollen manufactures so much, that, instead of importing from others to the value of 80 millions of livres, she now exports to the value of 80 millions annually; which is a gain to the nation of 164 millions, or about 7,500,000*l.* Sterling; and her annual exports, now amounting to near 4,000,000*l.* Sterling, is perhaps greater than the annual exports from England, as appears by the following custom-house-entries as low as the year 1743.

Woollen exports from England.

1739,	_____	£. 3,218,273
1740,	_____	3,056,720
1741,	_____	3,669,734
1742,	_____	3,358,787
1743,	_____	3,541,558

country,

country, by endeavouring to encourage it too much, and by giving it an undue preference to manufactures, which they seem to aim at a little too much by some late laws that have been passed with regard to Scotland; I mean the law passed in 1773, by which the ports of Scotland are always ordered to be shut against importation of oat-meal when the price of it is not above sixteen shillings per boll.

It seems evident to me, that this law has been obtained with a view to keep up the prices of corn in this country at that high rate, which every one must allow is above the medium-price of this kind of grain. It was perhaps imagined that this would encourage agriculture, enable tenants to give higher rents, and thus tend to promote in a high degree the interests of men of landed property.

I would be sorry to think, that an idea so narrow, as this is, should ever be heedlessly adopted by such a truly respectable body of men as the representatives in parliament for Scotland will be allowed to be. To aim at separating the interests of manufactures from that of agriculture, is like endeavouring to separate the shadow from its substance;—and

every

every attempt to do this, as it is at the same time foolish and unjust, must end in the disappointment of its projector, and prove detrimental to the interests of those very persons it was most intended to serve.

WE have already had occasion to see this maxim confirmed by many examples.—Nor is it difficult to foresee, that this instance will soon furnish another, if the policy adopted should be continued for some time: for if grain, by this means, should be kept up at a high rate for a few years, many men would be induced to take farms at a pretty advanced rent, in the hopes of its continuing, and would exert themselves as much as possible to rear abundance of corn.—By this means, with ordinary seasons, more corn will be reared than the people of the country can consume;—the markets will be overstocked;—prices will be reduced extremely;—these tenants will be unable to pay their rents;—and the proprietors, and the country in general, be reduced to a much worse state than if no such law had ever taken place*.

* See this subject more fully treated of in the Postscript to this letter.

It ought therefore to be instantly repealed, before these baneful effects can have taken place,—and a new system of laws for this part Scotland be introduced in its stead, calculated to preserve grain as much as possible at the medium price, without allowing it to go sensibly above or below it,—which will prove to be in the end most highly beneficial to all orders of people in the country.

WHEN equity influences the councils of a nation, the laws that they enact will seldom fail to prove beneficial to all the members of the community.

POSTSCRIPT

P O S T S C R I P T

T O

. LETTER THIRTEENTH

- C O N T E N T S.

An examination of the objections brought by Dr. Smith against the bounty on exportation of corn in England.—The bounty does not, as he alledges, raise the price of corn higher than it naturally would be both in years of plenty and in years of scarcity;—it only prevents it from falling immoderately low in the one case, or rising excessively high in the other case.—The bounty is attended with no peculiar advantage to the merchant importer and exporter of corn.—It does not encrease their business.—The importation is not augmented by an encrease of exportation, but directly the reverse.—Illustrated by examples.—It does not prevent the surplus of one year from relieving the deficiency of another; but, on the contrary, it is the only practicable means of making the great plenty of ordinary crops effectually supply the deficiency of one that is unusually scanty.—It has a natural tendency to moderate the price of grain upon the whole, and to keep the market much more steady than it naturally would be.—The bounty operates in the same way as an insurance-premium in any other hazardous trade.—Beneficial effects that result from this arrangement.—Hints tending to render the corn-laws still more perfect, and more beneficial to the country.—The above reasoning corroborated by facts.—Other objections examined.—The parallel drawn by Dr. Smith between the influences of the English corn-laws and the laws of Spain and Portugal, with regard to the precious metals, does not apply.—Difference between the commerce of grain, and that of almost every other article.—Other objections considered.—The bounty really tends to encourage the production of corn, and is truly a bounty on production.—It does not serve to bolster up an unprofitable commerce,—but to regulate a commerce that never can be stopt, without producing the most fatal consequences.—The bounty in fact costs the nation nothing,—but, on the contrary, tends to enrich it in the most essential manner.—Other positions examined.—Corn is not, strictly speaking, the commodity that regulates the price of all others.—Illustrated by various examples.—The price of corn itself is regulated in many cases by that of manufactures.—The *real* price of corn may be altered as well as that of every other commodity.—Facts directly contradict the whole of Dr. Smith's reasoning on this head.—General conclusion.—The bounty on corn is perhaps the wisest political institution that has graced the annals of any country.—Proposal for amending the corn-laws with regard to Scotland.

P O S T S C R I P T

T O

LETTER THIRTEENTH.

**On the nature and influence of the
BOUNTY ON CORN, and the other
CORN-LAWS of Great Britain.**

SINCE writing the above, I have seen the very ingenious treatise of Dr. Adam Smith on the nature and causes of the wealth of nations; and am sorry to find, that I have the misfortune to differ in opinion from an author of such extensive knowledge, and liberal sentiments, on a subject of so much real importance as that which is here treated of. And as it may be supposed that the opinion of such a respectable

respectable author will have great weight on the generality of mankind, it is of much importance to examine, whether that opinion has been adopted in consequence of just reasoning, or the reverse: for the wisest of mankind may be at times misled. Let this be my excuse for here endeavouring to investigate this subject with a more than ordinary degree of precision.

THE reader will easily perceive, that the applause I have bestowed above on the general system of corn-laws in England, is founded entirely on the supposition that they are peculiarly calculated to prevent the fluctuation of the price of grain:—An object that will be allowed to be of the highest importance to the well-being of almost every individual of the state. This object seems, however, to have been entirely overlooked by Dr. Smith, who considers the bounty on corn only as a contrivance calculated to enhance the price of grain, and thus to give an exorbitant profit to the farmer and corn-merchant:—Considerations which, if ever they influenced the legislature, it must be acknowledged, were little deserving their favourable notice, and which were entirely disregarded by me. This may in some measure account for

for our differing in opinion. But as it appears to me that Dr. Smith's reasoning on this subject is not so strictly accurate as what we usually meet with in that valuable performance, I find it necessary to examine some of these passages with particular attention; and hope, that while I mean to proceed with that candid impartiality which becomes one who is in search of truth, I shall no where forget myself so far, as to lose the deference justly due to one of such a respectable character.

"In the years of plenty," says he, "it has
 "been already observed, the bounty by occa-
 "sioning an extraordinary exportation, neces-
 "sarily keeps up the price of corn in the home
 "market above what it would naturally fall
 "to. To do so, was the avowed purpose of
 "the institution. In years of scarcity, though
 "the bounty is frequently suspended, yet the
 "great exportation which it occasions in years
 "of plenty, must frequently hinder more or
 "less *the plenty of one year from relieving the*
 "*scarcity of another.* Both in years of plenty
 "and in years of scarcity, therefore, the boun-
 "ty necessarily tends to raise the money-price
 "of corn somewhat higher than it otherwise
 "would

"would be in the home market *."—The hurtful effects of which general rise of price, supposing it real, he afterwards points out at great length.

THAT the bounty has a necessary tendency to raise the price of grain, not only *somewhat*, but a *great deal*, higher than it naturally would be, in years of plenty, in the home market, will not be denied; but it has been already showed in the preceding letter, that this circumstance is attended with the most beneficial consequences; not to the farmer only, but to the state in general, and to almost every individual in it.—This circumstance, therefore, cannot be considered as disadvantageous.

If it tended, however, to raise the price of grain also in years of scarcity, it would indeed be a destructive institution, and ought to be immediately abolished: but that it tends as much to *lower* the price of grain in times of scarcity, as to *raise* it in times of plenty, will, I hope, appear from the following considerations.

* Inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations, vol. 2. p. 96.

If the bounty were withdrawn, it would of necessity follow, that in years of plenty, the market being overstocked, prices would naturally fall ; — not in exact proportion to the amount of the surplus quantity, but a great deal below it. For where there are many sellers and few buyers, it is well known, that in all cases, but more especially with regard to those goods that are of a perishable nature, as grain, the price will fall extremely below the ordinary rate.

WHEN this should happen,—not to mention the general stagnation to the industry of the whole nation that would ensue, the farmer in particular would find himself thrown into the most disagreeable embarrassment. A part of his corn would remain on hand ; and the low price he would receive for what he could sell, would be so far from replacing to him the whole of his outlay, with the ordinary profits of stock *, that he would find himself unable to prosecute his ordinary employment with profit.

* I here, and through the whole of this Postscript, adopt the general terms employed by Dr. Smith, as I think they apply with peculiar propriety to the subject treated of.

LET us, however, suppose, that he should be able, tho' with difficulty, to bear this shock, and that he should labour his ground for the ensuing crop with the same spirit as usual. If that year should also turn out to be a year of plenty, the savings of his former crop, together with the surplus produce of this crop, added to the necessity the farmer would be under to sell *at any rate*, would now reduce the price so very low, that he would be involved in still greater and more inevitable distress. His stock, instead of being profitably employed for producing more grain, and putting in motion a greater quantity of national industry, would be locked up in attempting to preserve a perishable commodity, which no care nor expence could possibly preserve for any considerable length of time. And no man knows better than Dr. Smith, what are the inconveniencies that result from thus locking up the productive stock of any community.

It does not, however, import our present argument, to point out these inconveniencies with a scrupulous minuteness. It is sufficient for our purpose here to observe, that in a few years of moderate abundance, the farmers in these circumstances would find themselves
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unable to follow their employment with profit, and would therefore be obliged, either to abandon it, or by a less-spirited culture to raise less grain, so as to enhance the price. Less corn, in either of these cases, would inevitably be produced; and thus the farmer, by ensuring a scanty crop, would secure to himself a certain market, and a good price.

IN consequence of this necessary system of conduct, scanty crops would no doubt be produced, even in favourable seasons; — but if, along with this artificial scarcity, it should so happen, that the seasons were also unfavourable, the deficiency would be so very great, that the small surplus savings of former years, diminished by the innumerable accidents to which these must ever be exposed, would afford but a very trifling supply, and would be very far from making up for the double deficiency that would arise from an unfavourable season and imperfect cultivation: and if we had already occasion to remark, that the price of grain was unreasonably lowered when a small proportion of it remained unsold, it will readily occur to every reader, that the price will be still more exorbitantly raised when the quantity of grain shall thus fall a little short of the demand there is for it.

AND if a second year of scarcity should succeed the first, as there would then be no surplus savings, the price would, if possible, be raised still higher, and the people be involved in greater distress.

IF it should be alledged, that an unlimited freedom of importation and exportation of grain at all times, would in some measure alleviate these evils, by taking from the farmer his surplus produce in years of plenty, and by supplying the deficiencies of a scanty crop by an importation from other countries in years of scarcity, I readily allow, that it would produce these beneficial consequences *in some measure*, although in a much less perfect degree than would naturally result from a well-regulated bounty on grain. But if Dr. Smith means to insinuate, that this unlimited freedom in the commerce of grain should be substituted instead of the bounty, and would be attended with those beneficial consequences he enumerates, it would seem that he has been guilty of a small inaccuracy of reasoning on this occasion, that deserves to be pointed out, as he recurs to it in several other parts of his book.

If

IF a free commerce of corn should alleviate the distress of the farmer, by taking from him in years of plenty his surplus produce, and carrying it away to other places where it might be more needed at the time, it must follow, that, in this case, *the savings of former years of plenty*, being thus carried out of the country, could no more tend to moderate the price in times of scarcity, than if that superfluous produce had been carried away in consequence of the bounty; so that Dr. Smith must either give up with the free commerce of grain, or strike off *the savings of former years* from his list of advantages which the country is deprived of only by the bounty, seeing it would be equally deprived of it by his favourite system of a free commerce: and setting aside this article of the savings of former years, (an article besides in every possible state of things more imaginary than real), I presume it will be impossible to show, in what manner the bounty can have a tendency to raise the price of grain in years of scarcity. Considered, therefore, merely in this view, of its tending to keep the market-price of grain more steady than it otherwise would be, the bounty would seem to be highly beneficial to the state.—That this, however, is but *one* of the *many* benefits it procures,

procures, I shall have occasion to show in answering the following heavy charge brought by Dr. Smith against the corn-laws and corn-merchants of England,

“THERE is not” says he, “perhaps but
 “one set of men in the whole commonwealth,
 “to whom the bounty either was or could be
 “really serviceable. These were the corn-
 “merchants, the exporters and importers of
 “corn. In years of plenty, the bounty ne-
 “cessarily occasions a greater exportation
 “than would otherwise have taken place; and
 “by hindering *the plenty of one year* from re-
 “lieving *the scarcity of another*, it occasioned
 “in years of scarcity a greater importation
 “than otherwise would have been necessary.
 “It increased the business of the corn-merchant
 “in both; and in years of scarcity it not only
 “enabled him to import a greater quantity,
 “but to sell it at a better price, and conse-
 “quently with a greater profit, than he
 “otherwise could have made, *if the plenty of*
 “*one year* had not been more or less hindered
 “from relieving *the scarcity of another*. It is
 “in this set of men accordingly that I have
 “observed the greatest zeal for the continuance
 “or renewal of the bounty.” Vol. 2, p. 99.

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Nothing can be more unjust and fallacious than the reasoning in this passage ; and it rests on principles so diametrically opposite to those by which our author is usually guided, as can hardly fail to excite some degree of astonishment in the mind of the attentive reader : yet so firmly have these heterogeneous ideas taken possession of his mind, that he repeats the same sentiments again and again in various places of his book, and dwells upon them as if they were fundamental axioms of the highest importance, which could not be controverted. It becomes necessary in these circumstances to expose their fallacy.

No one who has read Dr. Smith's performance can never suppose he means to insinuate, that the exportation and importation of corn should be always prohibited ; I shall therefore omit taking any notice of the consequences that would result from that arrangement.

BUT if exportation of corn is allowed of in years of plenty, and importation is not prohibited in years of scarcity, the corn-merchants would have at least *as much* business without the bounty as with it, and it would be in their

their power to have *much bigger* profits: for if, in years of plenty, the quantity of grain should be more than sufficient to supply the home market, the price, it is evident, would sink so low as to enable the merchant to have a profit on exporting it, as well as at present. The exportation, I am indeed sensible, would in this case be soon very much diminished;—but neither the employment nor the profits of the merchant would be diminished by that circumstance. For,

Nothing can be more certain, (and Dr. Smith will readily allow it), than that the quantity of grain raised in any country, will always be exactly proportioned to the ordinary and steady demand for it. When the quantity of grain produced shall exceed that ordinary demand, the farmer, finding no vent for it, will be obliged to abandon that unprofitable trade, and betake himself to some other, in which he can get more certain returns. If, on the contrary, the quantity produced should fall short of that demand, the price of grain would be raised so much by that circumstance, as to increase the farmer's profit beyond that of other trades; which would tempt so many to go to that business, as would by their competition

petition with one another soon reduce the profits on agriculture to the same general medium of profit as in other trades.

Now, if the farmers in Great Britain had only a demand for as much grain as the inhabitants of this island alone could annually consume, they would raise no more than was just sufficient for that purpose *in ordinary years*. But if, besides that, there were a certain and steady demand for a considerable quantity for exportation, *that* quantity also would be raised in ordinary years. But if the bounty were discontinued, there would be no certain and steady demand for exportation, so that no more grain would be reared in Britain in a year of scarcity, than would have been barely sufficient to have supported the inhabitants if it had been an ordinary crop; in which case the deficiency of that scanty crop would fall to be made up by an importation from other countries. In these circumstances, therefore, the corn-merchant would have abundant employment *in years of scarcity*; and as the inhabitants would be under the necessity of depending entirely upon him for their subsistence, he would have a better opportunity of enhancing

ing the price, and of *grinding the faces* of the poor, than he can have according to the present system, as will by and by more clearly appear. For,

ON the other hand,——while the farmers continue to be employed in rearing corn for exportation as well as for the home market, in a year of scarcity, the quantity that was destined for exportation, comes to be naturally applied to make up the deficiency of that part of the crop which was originally destined for the home market ; so that, instead of being obliged to import the whole of that deficiency from abroad, which otherwise must of necessity have been done, the inhabitants are supplied chiefly, perhaps entirely, with their own home produce ; and are thus saved the whole amount of the price of freight, insurance, and merchants profits :—A saving of no trifling moment to them. And as the home market would be thus more abundantly supplied than it otherwise would have been, the inhabitants do not lie so much at the mercy of the corn-merchants, who are thus deprived of the possibility of demanding or of obtaining such extravagant profits as they otherwise could have easily exacted.

IV,

If, therefore, in the present system, the corn-merchants do really *export* more than they otherwise would do, they *import* less; so that they have nearly the same *quantum* of employment in the one case as in the other: but with this very important difference, that their profits are paid with infinitely greater ease to the subject, and benefit to the state, by the help of the bounty, than they could have been without it.

So far is the extraordinary exportation that may be occasioned by the bounty in years of plenty, from occasioning an extraordinary importation in years of scarcity, according to Dr. Smith's hypothesis, that it produces an effect directly the reverse. For it will appear that the greater the quantity that is exported in years of plenty, the quantity imported in years of scarcity will necessarily be small in proportion to it.

An example will make this plain to the meanest capacity.

LET us suppose, that the greatest variation, in the total amount of the crop between a year of

of the greatest plenty and one of the greatest scarcity, amounts to one fourth of the whole crop.

LET us again suppose, that the ordinary and constant export, did, in years of medium plenty, amount to one eighth of the whole produce, the farmer would in this case be in the constant practice of rearing one eighth more grain than supplied the inhabitants *in ordinary years*; so that when the crop, through the unfavourableness of the seasons, fell short of its ordinary quantity one eighth part, there would still be enough in the country to supply the internal demand; as the eighth part of it that was destined for exportation would exactly supply the deficiency. No importation, therefore, would be needed in this case.

BUT if the ordinary demand for exportation should have amounted to no more than one sixteenth; although, in the case above supposed, this sixteenth part which was allotted for exportation should be kept at home, there would still remain a deficiency of another sixteenth; to make up for which deficiency, recourse must be had to importation. Nor will it be possible to obtain it from abroad till the price in the home market shall rise to such a rate as to pay for freight, insurance,

insurance, and merchants profits, to enable them to bring it from foreign countries.—It is plain, however, that if the deficiency of the crop had in this case amounted to no more than one sixteenth of the medium years, there would have been no occasion for any importation; so that, according to this arrangement also, it would be but seldom that corn could be imported, and then in small quantities only.

BUT if, instead of one eighth, or one sixteenth, the usual quantity exported should have amounted to one fourth of the whole crop in ordinary years, it would follow, that in the greatest scarcity that could ever happen from bad seasons, there would still remain one eighth for exportation after the deficiency occasioned by the bad crop was fully supplied. According to this arrangement, the inhabitants would enjoy an universal abundance in spite of the greatest variation of seasons: nor could their markets ever experience any fluctuations of price but those that should depend on foreign markets; which might be easily so regulated by the bounty as to be scarce ever felt.

So far, therefore, is an extraordinary exportation in years of plenty from giving the merchant

chant importers extraordinary employment in years of scarcity, that if our ordinary exports were sufficiently abundant, they would annihilate entirely the business of the merchant importer : and the importation in years of scarcity must always be diminished exactly in the same proportion as the ordinary quantity of corn exported in years of plenty shall encrease.

It is equally true, that so far is the exportation occasioned by the bounty from hindering the plenty of one year from relieving the scarcity of another, as Dr. Smith supposes, that it is perhaps the only method that can be devised for effecting that purpose with any degree of laudable oeconomy.

As to the supposition that farmers would ever be induced to rear more grain than was necessary for supplying the demand in years of tolerable plenty, and that they should make a constant practice of retaining the surplus quantity in their own possession till a year of scarcity should come, I frankly own, that the idea of it appears to me so extravagantly absurd, when examined even with a slight degree of attention, that I should suspect I did not understand
Dr. Smith's

Dr. Smith's meaning in the passages above quoted, and many others where he mentions the *surplus of one crop relieving the deficiencies of another*; yet if it is not this he means, I own myself at a loss to know what it is. If I am thus induced to give answers to an opinion that he never meant to maintain, I hope he will not attribute it to any desire of misrepresenting his arguments, but purely to misconception. It would have been well if he had expressed himself a little more clearly on this head. A few observations will suffice to shew the impracticability of such a plan as that above alluded to.

WERE a year of plenty to be succeeded immediately by a year of scarcity, and were that scarcity to be foreseen beforehand, like that which happened to Joseph in Egypt, such a thing as this might sometimes be done. But should seven years of plenty be succeeded by seven years of scarcity, can any one imagine, that the surplus produce of the plentiful years would be accumulated to supply a scarcity that might never perhaps be experienced? The history of Joseph's dearth gives a sufficient answer to the question.—No:—the farmer has not granaries to preserve his grain,—he
has

has not stock to carry on his ordinary operations without regular annual returns : — and Dr. Smith himself will tell us, that he would not have power to protect it from the mob, in a country like ours, were he possessed of every other convenience. Even if the internal dealer in corn should come, like Joseph, to the farmer's assistance, the immense accumulation of stock that would here be locked up, would deaden the general industry of the nation exceedingly, as all that stock must be withdrawn from some other productive employment. — The waste that would be sustained by attempting to preserve such a perishable commodity, and the risk the merchant would run of fire, of mobs, and of other disasters, would necessarily raise the price so much as could afford the merchant no sort of reasonable profit but in years of absolute famine, like that which heretofore enslaved Egypt. In short, let us view this undertaking in every possible light, and we shall find it so closely environed with difficulties on every side, as to show that it is altogether impracticable. Impracticable, however, as it is, it has been often attempted to be realised ; and there are not wanting many instances of rich misers in every corner of the country, who have endeavoured to augment their

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their stores, by refusing to sell their grain in ordinary years, and attempting to keep it till times of scarcity: but they have suffered so much for their temerity, as clearly demonstrates that such a plan can hardly be followed in any case with safety, far less with profit; and sufficiently authorises the wisdom of the general maxim, *That the farmer's best profit is the first*; and that it is always wise in him to take the current price of the year, however low that price may be. A prudent man, therefore, will have no savings of consequence, even in the most plentiful year:—a fool, if he attempts it, will not have them long.—

BUT, in consequence of the great exportation occasioned by the bounty, it has been showed, that a great surplus may be reared in plentiful years; which, instead of being preserved a dead and decaying stock, is immediately sent abroad. And in years of scarcity, the quantity which has been raised for succeeding that which was sent abroad, by being directly applied to the use of the inhabitants, supplies, with the most judicious œconomy, the deficiency of the home market. In this manner the farmer, by never finding that he can have too great a

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surplus produce in years of plenty, exerts himself as much as he can to raise more ; and in this manner, and in this alone, can the surplus produce of a plentiful crop be made instrumental with the strictest oeconomy in diminishing the deficiency of one that is more scanty. If this method had been adopted in Egypt, the *people* might have been all abundantly fed, and still have retained their freedom during the seven years of famine, instead of becoming slaves to the cruel policy of Joseph.

THUS it appears, that Dr. Smith's reasoning, as to the particulars here investigated, is entirely fallacious ; and that the conclusions he draws from every position, are not only erroneous, but even directly the reverse of what they ought to have been. I would therefore apply to the merchant importer and exporter of grain, the observations he makes upon the importance of the internal corn-merchant, as they are equally applicable to both : For in this enlarged sense I perfectly agree with him in thinking, that " after the business of the
" farmer, that of the corn-merchant is in reality
" the trade, which, if properly protected and
" encouraged, would contribute the most to
" the raising of corn. It would support the
" trade

"trade of the farmer in the same manner as
"the trade of the wholesale dealer supports
"the manufacturer." After what has been
said, it is unnecessary to add, that he has been
induced to make a distinction between these
two classes of corn-merchants in consequence
of pursuing a train of fallacious argumentati-
on.

It is not, therefore, because the bounty
upon corn has a tendency to encrease the price
of grain, and thus apparently to enrich the
proprietor and farmer, or because it encreases
the business and profits of the merchant ex-
porter, and importer of corn, that I have
bestowed such praises upon this system of le-
gislation. No political system that should aim
at giving one class of citizens an undue prefer-
ence to other classes, could be justly entitled to
any degree of praise from a well-informed
member of the state. But it is because that at
the same time that it has a natural tendency
to moderate the price of grain upon the whole,
it affords a constant market to the farmer,
(which is the surest way of promoting alike the
interests of agriculture and of natural industry);
but more especially, because it tends in the
most direct manner to prevent the price of grain

from ever rising to an extravagant rate, or falling to an unreasonable abasement, which I consider as a benefit of the highest and most general importance; as it more effectually promotes the general industry of all ranks of people, and thus augments the vigour and internal felicity of the state, than any other circumstance that could be named.

AND that the bounty has a natural tendency to produce all these salutary effects, in a higher degree than would be produced by an unlimited freedom as to the commerce of grain; and, in particular, that it necessarily moderates the price of grain in years of scarcity, instead of raising it higher than it otherwise would be, as Dr. Smith asserts, will appear to the reader, I hope, very plain, not only from what has been already said, but also from the following parallel between the consequences that would be the result of a free trade in corn, compared with that which is regulated by the bounty.

FIRST, Without the help of the bounty, no corn could ever have been exported till the price fell so low in our own market as to be the whole amount of freight, insurance, commission,

commission, and merchants profit, below the then selling price of grain in some foreign market to which it could be carried. In which case it must have been at *least* the whole amount of the bounty below the lowest price it can possibly ever fall to where that is allowed.

SECONDLY, There never could have been any corn imported till the price in Britain should have exceeded that in some foreign state from whence it could be brought, by the full amount of the freight, insurance, and merchants profits, for transporting it : which articles in time of war, or other disastrous occurrences, must have been on some occasions extremely high. Whereas it has been shewed, that were exportation duly encouraged by a well-regulated bounty, the home market would at all times be abundantly supplied, merely by detaining at home our own surplus produce in years of scarcity ; and thus the whole freight and other charges be saved to the consumer ; which alone would be an article of very great national advantage. But if it be likewise considered, that in consequence of this plenty at home, the market-price may not perhaps rise *nearly* to that height which would
have

have admitted of importation, the national benefit procured by it will appear to be still more considerable.

THIRDLY, Were we thus obliged to depend on foreign markets for a supply to our deficiencies in years of scarcity, instead of relying on our own surplus produce obtained by the aid of the bounty; in times of *general* scarcity in other countries (and such disasters do sometimes occur, from a very general failure of crop) we might be reduced to the greatest distress for want of food, and the price of grain be raised to the most extravagant height; as was frequently the case with our forefathers, to the utter ruin of all the poor in the kingdom. But,

FOURTHLY, We would in this case not only be in danger of suffering from the inclemency of seasons, but would be obliged to rely in some measure on the caprice of foreign nations for our daily bread. In consequence of wars, political alliances, or other unlooked-for circumstances that often influence the rulers of kingdoms, the only ports from which we could be supplied on a particular emergency, might be shut up from us, and we be obliged

obliged to suffer all the miseries of famine. Is it prudent in any nation which has it in its power to ward off such dreadful calamities, not to adopt that plan of conduct that would effect it, if it should even be attended with very great expence? But it is plain, that if by means of a well-regulated bounty, the general exportation of grain should ever become so considerable, as, in years of moderate plenty, always to exceed the greatest deficiency of crop that should ever be known to happen from unfavourable seasons, these very beneficial effects would be with certainty insured to Britain, and her inhabitants might remain in perfect security against the fear of dearth, much more against the fear of that most dreadful of all scourges, a famine.

Dr. Smith asserts, that the price of grain regulates the price of every other commodity in a state ; and although I may not be disposed to admit of this position in its full extent, yet upon his own principles it would seem to follow, that that state will be least liable to internal convulsions, where this universal regulator is permitted to vary as little as possible, and that he ought to have been happy at discovering an easy and effectual means of rendering

dering that regulator as steady as the nature of things will admit of; especially if this corrector should likewise tend to make the price of that universal standard lower upon the whole than it could have been without it; (for however much I may be convinced, that an accidental depression of the price of grain below the medium price is always attended with hurtful consequences to the state; yet I presume we will both agree in thinking, that it is at all times an advantage to a state to have that general price of corn as low as the nature of things will properly admit of;) and as the bounty on corn naturally tends to produce both of these good effects, we would have expected that it would have met with his approbation instead of censure. For although the bounty deprives the farmer of the profits he might reap by the great rise of price that would ensue in consequence of a scanty crop, —yet this small loss is much more than made up to him by the greater price he receives for his corn in years of plenty, and the certainty it gives him of a ready market for his grain at all times; which, however abundant, he is thus assured will never be allowed to remain unfold. He therefore goes on with spirit in his undertakings, and produces much
more

more grain with the same expence of stock and labour than he otherwise could have done ; and, like every other manufacturer in similar circumstances, can thus afford to sell his goods cheaper upon the whole than formerly, although he himself has perhaps better profit, and lives better, than he would have done in other circumstances.

CONSIDERED in this light, the bounty might with propriety be compared to a premium for insurance in any other hazardous undertaking. Agriculture is a trade necessarily subjected to very hazardous variations, owing to the unavoidable difference of seasons, and consequent encrease and decrease of crop, added to the very perishable nature of grain of all sorts. This very hazardous employment, however, must, from the nature of things, be carried on by a number of individuals, the mediocrity of whose capital stock renders them incapable of bearing these great fluctuations without the most sensible inconveniencies to themselves and families. Like every other hazardous employment, therefore, the profits must be upon the whole higher than in other less hazardous trades, otherwise it would be abandoned ; and even with these
high

high profits the risk and outlay is so great, as frequently to reduce those of moderate stock to beggary, whose ruin deranges the whole internal oeconomy of the state. It is moderate profits in trade, and quick returns of stock, that most effectually contribute towards enriching the seller and accommodating the buyer; on both which accounts it would be highly beneficial to the state to devise a proper method of diminishing the risks of the farmer.

In similar circumstances with this, it has been found, that the community has derived very high advantages from insurances in every other branch of trade. By the help of this most useful invention of modern times, a man may safely venture his whole stock in the most hazardous undertaking, without the smallest risk of ruining his family. In consequence of this security, such hazardous trades are no longer abandoned to those in desperate circumstances, who in hopes of obtaining a lucky chance, venture their little all, and are ruined by its failure. They then come to be viewed as respectable employments, and are followed by men of knowledge and abilities, who

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who by strenuous efforts strive to bring them to the utmost degree of perfection they are capable of attaining. The competition which this necessarily occasions between the numerous dealers who are thus induced to pursue these trades, soon reduces the profits upon them much lower than formerly. The market will be of course more abundantly supplied with that particular commodity in which they deal, and the price will be also more moderate than before. In every case, however, the buyers must at any rate pay the insurance-price;—and the only question that in this case remains to be determined is, Whether it will be more beneficial to the community at large to have this insurance-money advanced by some rich society, who find their profit upon such a trade; or if every individual shall still be left to bear his own private losses, and to indemnify himself for them in the best manner he can?—No man who is in the least acquainted with trade, will be at a loss to determine this question in favour of the public insurance.

BUT the bounty on grain gives the farmer that security he stood in need of, and is by consequence similar in its effects to an insurance—

ance-premium in every other hazardous branch of trade.

OR, if it should please another rather to consider the bounty on corn as a premium advanced by the community, for insurance against the loss they might sustain from a variation of seasons, the reasoning would be equally just, and would only differ from the former in the terms.

FOR in whatever manner it may be advanced, it will not admit of a doubt, that the community must pay in one way or other more money for an equal quantity of grain, the produce of a scanty crop, than of one that is more abundant, not only to make up to the grower the inlack he feels in the quantity, but also to make up for the loss he sustained by the unreasonable lowness of price in a year of too much plenty. If the farmer is left to himself, and this deficiency of crop comes to be supplied by importation, the consumers must, in the first place, pay a high premium to the farmer in the great advance on the price of grain, which must be at least so high, as to be the whole price of freight, merchants profits,

fits, &c. above some foreign accessible market at the time, and then another premium to the merchant importer, to enable him to bring it from abroad. In this case the premium given to the farmer alone, must be altogether sufficient to indemnify *him* for his deficiency of crop and former losses, otherwise he cannot continue his employment; but besides this, there still remains to be paid another premium to the merchant-importer, which is entirely a superfluous expence to the state, as it has already paid the farmer his full insurance-profit: and what aggravates the misfortune in this case is, that both of these high premiums come to be paid at once entirely by the lower orders of the people; so that this is the most destructive method of levying it that could possibly be invented.

By contriving, however, to pay the farmer for the loss he might sustain in a year of plenty from the disproportionate lowness of price, or, in other words, by granting the bounty, they enable him to dispense with the extraordinary price he would have been obliged to exact in years of scarcity, and, by tempting him to rear as much grain as possible, they put it

it in his power to apply a part, or the whole, of his ordinary surplus produce to the use of the home market, instead of sending it abroad, as it was originally intended. In this manner the market is kept low; and the inhabitants are at this time saved, not only the farmer's extraordinary premium, but also the high charge of freight and merchants profits on importation, which they would otherwise have been obliged to advance. In this case also the premium is paid, viz. by the advance of the bounty-money, and the rise of price which that occasions in plentiful years; but it is paid in such a manner as not to be sensibly burdensome to the state.

WHERE such a political arrangement takes place, the community at large may be said to become the insurer of every individual against the inconvenience that may arise from unfavourable seasons and a scanty crop. Like the Edinburgh Friendly Insurance Company, the whole society become bound to make up the loss that shall be sustained by any individual among them from fire; which enables every one of its members to live in perfect security at all times, instead of running the risk of
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AND as it is not in the power of man entirely to prevent accidental fires in the one case, or accidental bad seasons in the other; so in neither case is it possible to prevent entirely the loss that may thus be sustained by those individuals that may be most exposed to danger. It ought, however, to be the study of the politician, to make these unavoidable losses be as little hurtful to the state as possible; which can be in no manner so well effected as by making that loss be born by the community at large, as equally as possible, instead of allowing it to continue to rest entirely upon the individuals on whom the principal loss should first fall.

THE bounty on corn is even perhaps more highly beneficial than the insurance on any other hazardous stock; because, in most other cases, it is those who have most property that are most exposed to danger; whereas here it is the poor, and those who have least to lose, who are the principal, and almost only sufferers, when danger comes: but as the bounty is paid out

out of the aggregate funds of the whole community, the rich members of the state contribute their proportion of the premium; which insures the poor a certainty of enjoying the necessaries of life at all times at a moderate price.

THE bounty has a natural tendency to overrule even the influence of bad seasons themselves, and prevent them from varying the total amount of the crop so much as they otherwise would do: for as it gives the farmer perfect security, and enables him to apply his whole capital to the improvement of his trade, it necessarily occasions a more perfect culture of the soil; and every sensible farmer knows, that a rich soil in a high degree of cultivation, is far less liable to be affected by a variation of seasons, than one that is in worse order at the time. Like a man of a robust temperament and healthy constitution, who can bear, without any sensible inconvenience, such great variations as to diet, air, exercise, &c. as would totally destroy a man of a weakly habit, the produce of an improved soil will hardly be in the least affected by a variation of season, that would entirely destroy the crop of one that was
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in a poor and exhausted condition. In this manner the inconveniencies of bad seasons come to be less sensibly felt, and the consequent necessity of high prices proportionally abated.

THE corn-laws of England, therefore, as tending to produce all these beneficial effects, I think we need not hesitate to call extremely wise : and although it should be allowed, that in some respects they are much less perfect than they might be, we ought not to endeavour to vilify them, and cause them to be rejected on account of these defects; but rather endeavour to point out such defects as need to be corrected, so as to improve them more and more, and render them still more beneficial to posterity than they have been to ourselves. With this view I shall suggest the following hints, relating to the corn-laws, to the consideration of the judicious reader.

It would seem reasonable, that instead of one invariable bounty to be paid upon the exportation of grain equally at all times, when the grain in our home market was below one specified price, it would be more equitable,

and better adapted to the end in view, (the preventing as much as possible all variations in the price of grain in the home market), to make the bounty vary with the price of grain in the home market, so as that it should encrease as the price of grain decreased.

With the same intention it would be proper, not only to permit the importation of corn when the price at home exceeded a certain rate, but even to give a premium on importation when it should rise above another limited price; and which premium should also encrease as the price in the home market encreased.

Let us, for example, suppose, that the price of wheat fluctuated between 30 shillings and 60 shillings per quarter, and that it was intended never to allow it to come to either of these prices,—the premium might vary in some measure, as in the following table.

When

When the price of wheat per quarter should be at the bounty on exportation should be per quarter

s.	s.
30 or under, - - -	10
34 - - -	8
38 - - -	6
42 - - -	4
44 - - -	2
46 - - -	1
48 {	Exportation to cease, and importation be allowed of.
50 - - -	1 { premium on importation.
52 - - -	2
54 - - -	4
56 - - -	6
58 - - -	8
60 and all above that price	10

I do not pretend to determine, whether or not the rates in the above table are the best that could be chosen. All I mean to insinuate is, that a system of corn-laws founded on these principles, if rightly digested, would probably lay the best foundation possible for a steady and settled market for grain at a moderate price,

Nor would there be given, according to this system, any undue preference, either to the farmer on the one hand, or to the other classes of people on the other hand; as an equal provision would be made for moderating the price when too high, as for raising them when too low. Perhaps the greatest inconvenience attending it would be the trouble of settling the prices so as to regulate the bounty or premium; but this might be done by the sheriffs for their respective counties, at regular periods, as is practised at present in some cases in Scotland. — This particular will be more fully explained in the sequel.

By such a system, agriculture would be more effectually encouraged than by the corn-laws at present in force in England, without paying a greater sum for the bounty. For as the premium would be greatest when the prices were low, there would be on these occasions a sudden demand for exportation, which would quickly raise the price, and lower the bounty with it; which would soon bring it to the ordinary selling-price of grain at present; in which case the bounty would be less than our law just now allows of: so that the farmer would be more certain of a reasonable price, and

and the manufacturer more effectually secured against the possibility of a dearth, than at present. By this steady encouragement to the farmer, it is probable the exportation would encrease so much, as in time totally to prevent the necessity of any importation at all. The present corn-laws in England have even already effected this in a great degree.

OTHERS before me have been convinced of the beneficial effects of the bounty; and, not satisfied with reasoning alone, have had recourse to facts in confirmation of their reasoning; alledging, that notwithstanding the great decrease in the value of money since this system of legislation has been adopted, and the consequent encrease in the price of almost every other article in England; yet grain continues a singular exception to that general rule; as its price has decreased instead of encreasing since that period, and consequently its *real* value is just now much lower than it was before the bounty was allowed of; which they have, with seeming justice, attributed in a great measure to the operation of the corn-laws.

THIS fact is admitted by all parties; but, in granting the fact, Dr. Smith affirms, "that this
"event,"

“event,” (viz. the fall of the average price of corn since the bounty), “supposing it to be
 “as real as I believe it to be, must have hap-
 “pened *in spite of the bounty*, and cannot pos-
 “sibly have happened *in consequence of it* *.”

IN a matter of so much moment, we cannot help regretting that Dr. Smith should have contented himself with the bare assertion, instead of farther proof. But as the fact so exactly corresponds with the conclusion that reasoning would have induced us to expect, it gives to that reasoning so much additional weight, as to entitle it at least to a serious refutation. Had the fact indeed been relied upon as the only proof in its favour, I would have thought there was reason to suspect it might have been occasioned by some other circumstance not attended to;—but when reasoning and facts thus mutually corroborate one another, no man of sound understanding will think, that a bold assertion, or flippant remark†, will be accepted of as a proof of their fallacy. That other circumstances have co-operated with the bounty in producing this effect, I am ready enough to allow;—but it

* Vol. 2. p. 92.

† See Dr. Smith, vol. 2. p. 128.

appears

appears to me at least, that it yet remains to be proved, that this event has happened, not in consequence, but *in spite of the bounty*.

I MAY likewise be permitted here to observe, that if it shall appear certain, that the bounty has a necessary tendency to lower the price of corn in years of scarcity, instead of raising it, as Dr. Smith alledges, all the reasoning that he produces, to shew the hurtful consequences that would result from the supposed rise of price that he imagines is occasioned by the bounty, falls of itself to the ground, without requiring any answer.

HIS reasoning, likewise, in the parallel drawn by him between the English corn-laws, and the laws of Spain and Portugal with regard to the commerce of gold and silver, seems to be liable to as great objections as the other particulars above specified. The exceeding perishable nature of the one commodity, and the great durability of the other, establishes alone a natural distinction between them, that it is impossible for any political institution ever to destroy. If, to pursue his own simile, the one may be dammed up so as to be made to spread

spread over the surface of a large extent of country, and produce an extensive permanent lake that is subject to no abatement, the other would be of such a subtile or volatile nature as to sink through the soil, or be evaporated by the sun, before it could have covered the half of the bottom of the bason, so as to be incapable of producing even a temporary lake of great extent.—If, with Dr. Smith, the mines of precious metals may be compared to a never-failing spring, that by continuing to flow out with an equal current, will soon deluge any country into which it should be permitted to enter, and from which it could not issue with freedom, till at last it should rise above the barriers that had been erected to confine it, however high the dam might be, and would then flow over it just as fast as it should come in,—the production of grain may be with equal justice compared to the milk yielded by a cow, which, if not taken from her regularly as it is produced, will soon decrease in quantity, so as in a short time to dry up entirely, unless it is drawn from her at regular and short intervals, however rich and abundant her pasture may be.

Dr. Smith himself seems to have been fully
sensible

sensible of the justness of this reasoning, when he observes before he quits the subject entirely, that "the trade of the merchant exporter of corn for foreign consumption, certainly does not contribute *directly* to the plentiful supply of the home market. It does so, however, *indirectly*. From whatever source this supply may be usually drawn, whether from home growth, or from foreign importation, unless more corn is usually grown, or usually imported into the country, than what is usually consumed in it, the supply of the home market can never be very plentiful. But, *unless the surplus can in all ordinary cases, be exported*, the growers will be careful never to grow more, and the importers never to import more, than what the bare consumption of the home market requires. *That market will seldom be overstocked; but it will generally be understocked*, the people whose business it is to supply it being generally afraid lest their goods should be left upon their hands *."

BUT if the market would *in all ordinary cases* be under-stocked, would not the price of

* Vol. 2, p. 123.

grain be *in all ordinary cases* enhanced by that circumstance? — It has, however, been already shown, that grain *in ordinary cases* could not admit of being exported, at least from Britain, unless it were for the bounty. It must, therefore, according to Dr. Smith's own reasoning, tend in the most effectual manner to supply the home market abundantly at all times, and consequently to moderate the price.

It may perhaps be admitted as a general rule, That an unlimited freedom of commerce, without either encouragement or restraint, is the conduct that would be most highly beneficial to the state; and that it would be an advantage to the country in general, that those branches of commerce which cannot go on without aids of any sort, should be abandoned as unprofitable. But the rule will admit of many exceptions, and perhaps in no case more than it what relates to the commerce of grain. Other articles of commerce can usually be dispensed with whenever their price becomes too high, without materially affecting the well-being of the inhabitants in general, so that it is a matter of comparatively small importance whether they abound or are scanty. But this is far from
being

being the case with grain. It is indispensably necessary, that the inhabitants should be at all times provided with it in abundance : for it cannot be wanted for one day. In case of a scarcity of this commodity, therefore, it is more liable to an excessive rise of price than any other commodity ; and this excessive rise of price is attended with infinitely more fatal consequences than a rise in the price of any other commodity *. In other articles we trade merely for pleasure, or profit ;——in this we trade from necessity. It therefore becomes necessary to judge in a different manner as to this branch of trade from what we might do as to any other.

I MIGHT perhaps here close my remarks upon this subject of the bounty on grain.—— But as Dr. Smith returns to it often, and throws out various other observations on the commerce of grain, I shall hope to be excused, if I endeavour to follow him a little farther. Detached hints as coming from *him* may sometimes have effects that he was not aware of at the time he made them.

* The reader is desired here to recollect the dreadful consequences that resulted from this cause in the province of Bengal in the year 1772.

By what mode of reasoning Dr. Smith satisfied himself, that "the bounty upon the exportation of corn can in no respect promote the raising of that particular commodity of which it was meant to encourage the production *," it is difficult for me to perceive. But if he once came to be convinced of this as a fact, it was natural enough in him to refuse to admit the bounty on corn among the class of bounties on *production*; and to ascribe to it effects altogether different from those which result from that particular class of bounties. But if I have succeeded in proving that the bounty on exportation has the most direct tendency to encrease the quantity of corn *produced* in the country, the reader will, I hope, be satisfied, that it is in the strictest sense of the word a bounty on *production*, and is therefore entitled to the same degree of applause as other bounties of this class.

NEITHER can the bounty be considered as a prop given to one of those unprofitable manufactures that cannot be supported without more money than could ever be returned to

* See Vol. 2. p. 102.

the nation by it, as he supposes*. The corn-trade is one of those that can never cease without producing the most dreadful disasters to the country; so that it must go on alike with or without the bounty; with this only difference, that without the bounty the nation would export very little, and import a very great deal, whereas by the assistance of it, the case is directly the reverse, as the exports will always greatly overbalance the imports. In the first case it is plain, that the national stock would be diminished by the whole price of that which was paid for the corn imported; and in the last case it would gain the whole amount of what it drew from foreign nations as the price of corn exported. The society at large, therefore, must be gainers by the bounty. The bounty, in fact, costs the community nothing; nor does it take any thing from the pockets of individuals, but the reverse. The farmer must at any rate be paid for his labour, &c. or give up his employment; so that if he should lose by the low price in years of plenty, he must be again indemnified for that by a higher price in times of scarcity. If, therefore, the consumers advance a small part

* Vol. 2. p. 92. and 102.

of the price to the farmer in years of plenty, he repays it with abundant interest in times of scarcity, by a diminution of the price at that time. The bounty considered in this view, is exactly similar to the money that should be advanced to a poor manufacturer by his employer when he begins the work; as the manufacturer, by receiving a small part of the price before the work is finished, is thereby enabled to afford it upon the whole much cheaper than if he had been obliged to borrow money from another at an extravagant interest, to supply his necessities in the mean time; in which case, although the employer gives at one time money apparently for nothing, yet in the end that becomes a real saving to himself, as it comes at another time to be received as a part of the price of his goods. If the consumers of grain did not advance this small bounty to the farmer, they would be under the necessity of paying a much higher one not only to himself, at another time, but also to foreign nations in years of scarcity; so that instead of being a loss, it is a great saving to the society at large, and must in its consequences be attended with very great benefit to the consumers of grain themselves.

I WOULD

I WOULD not here take any farther notice of the position of Dr. Smith, That "corn is the regulating commodity by which the real value of all other commodities must be finally measured and determined *," were it not for the consequences he afterwards deduces from this, supposing it real and undeniable. It is not, however, strictly just; as the proportion of this regulating influence of corn may be varied by many circumstances that ought to have been attended to.

I PRESUME it will be allowed, that the price of corn can only affect the price of labour in so far as that corn is in all cases a necessary and indispensable article of the labourer's subsistence. If this is allowed, it could then only be said absolutely to regulate the price of labour, if what a man eats should constitute the whole expences of his family. This, however, is, in no state of society, the *whole* of his necessary expences. In many cases it constitutes but a very inconsiderable part of them; as the conveniencies, and even the luxuries of life, in an advanced state of society, come in time to be accounted necessities; and on these occasions

* Vol. 2. p. 101,

must

must affect the price of labour, as well as the price of grain affects it.

LODGING and clothing are in all cases necessary expences; and by consequence the price of labour must be affected by a variation in the rate of house-rent,—in the sumptuousness of houses, elegance of furniture, &c. that fashion may have made necessary in any one place for persons of a certain rank.—The price of cloth,—linen,—leather,—ribbons,—buckles,—buttons,—pins, and all the other numerous articles of clothing must in the same manner affect the price of the labour of those who use any of them.—In like manner, soap for cleaning,—fuel for warming, and oil or candles for affording light, are necessaries, and must affect the price of labour: to which must be added those luxuries that fashion may have rendered necessaries; as tea,—sugar,—tobacco,—snuff, &c.; together with the local taxes, such as poors-rate,—stent and burden * in towns, and every other particular that can constitute a part of the expence of a labourer or his family, in that way that these labourers may be accustomed to live in any country.

* Names of particular taxes levied by the authority of the magistrates of towns in Scotland.

BUT

BUT if all these articles are summed up on one side, and the single article of corn and other rude products of the fields on the other, it will be found, that unless in the very poorest families, these other extraneous articles bear a very considerable proportion to the whole annual expence of a family †.

I AM aware it will be here replied, That although it be granted, that every labourer must give out a considerable proportion of his earnings for other articles, besides for food, the produce of his native fields; yet as these articles are for the most part manufactured by other labourers, who will be able to sell them

† Dr. Smith himself seems to allow this, when he says, (p. 484. vol. 2.), “ A tax upon those articles, (that is, on the necessaries of life), necessarily raises their price somewhat higher than the amount of the tax; because the dealer, who advances the tax, must generally get it back with profit. Such a tax must therefore occasion a rise in the wages of labour, proportionable to this rise of price.” — “ Taxes upon necessaries, (p. ib. 486.), by raising the wages of labour, necessarily tend to raise the price of all manufactures, and consequently to diminish the extent of their sale and consumption.” — “ The price of fuel has so important an influence upon that of labour, that, all over Great Britain, manufactures have confined themselves principally to the coal-countries.” p. 448.

in proportion to the price of the grain on which they live, this brings it back again to the price of grain, which thus equally regulates the price of manufactures as of labour.—I answer, That there are many particulars that require to be examined before this reasoning can be admitted as conclusive.

In the first place, It must suppose that all the labourers who manufactured the articles which are needed by the first-named labourer, have lived entirely upon grain, or other produce of his native fields. For if they have consumed any part of the produce of other fields, the price of these articles may affect the price of the manufactures, as well as the corn of the country affected them.

In the second place, These manufactures must have been all worked up from materials the produce of his own country; otherwise the price of these rude materials, which cannot be in the least affected by the price of corn at home, must affect the price of the manufactured goods.

In the third place, Even supposing all the rude materials had been the produce of the particular

particular spot in question, they must have been afforded to the manufacturer at the same price they yielded to the first rearer; as in any other case the price of the manufactured goods must be affected by that artificial price of the raw materials which does not return to the soil. Hence there must be no taxes on any of the rude products of that country; as these will necessarily affect the price of the manufactures in proportion to their amount.

IN the fourth place, There must be no tax either national or local, levied from any of the particular manufacturers; as these taxes must necessarily tend in so far to affect the price of his labour, without having any necessary dependence on the price of the corn he shall have consumed. But,

IN the fifth place, It must be a rule without any exception, That none of the manufactures used in the country, nor any other articles consumed in it, have been brought from any other part of the world; for it is certain, that the value of every such manufacture does not depend in the least upon the price of the

corn in the country to which it may be transported.

BUT as it may happen, that a country shall receive many of its materials for building from abroad;—as it may be altogether, or in part, clothed with manufactures brought from a distance;—as it may also happen, that the inhabitants shall consume many articles of food, and other *necessary luxuries*, that come from afar;—as the natural rude products of the country itself may be taxed by the state, so as very much to enhance their price, and raise its own internal manufactures to a very great height;—and as local taxes on industry may be imposed, which will raise the price of these manufactures still higher—there can be no doubt but that the price of labour may be greatly varied in different places, altogether independent of the price of grain.

THERE is in fact no kingdom in Europe in which the price of labour is not more or less affected by all of these articles, as well as by the price of corn. In every country the greatest part of the rude products of the soil are more or less taxed by the state before they can reach the consumer;—in every country local
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or general taxes are levied from particular manufactures;—some part of the rude materials that are manufactured in every European state are brought from a distance;—in every district many of the most important manufactures consumed there, are brought from some other distant country;—and in all places the inhabitants consume some *necessary superfluities* that come from distant regions: In no place, therefore, is the price of labour or of manufactures *entirely* regulated by the price of grain in that place.

In some cases the price of grain has but a very slender influence on the price of labour, as that on some occasions constitutes but a small part of the annual expence of the labourer's family. For

If it should so happen, that a particular country had no manufactures* of its own, and if the inhabitants should sell nothing but corn, or other rude products of the soil, and should depend on distant countries for all their articles of cloathing, luxuries in eating, and every other

* The term *manufactures* is here employed in its vulgar acceptation, as excluding agriculture.

kind of manufacture ; it is plain that all these manufactures taken in the aggregate, enhanced by the heavy charge of freight, insurance, &c. would bear such an over-proportion to their food, (which in that case must necessarily be supposed to be abundant), as would have a much greater influence on the price of labour than the price of grain would have;—especially if these people, from the favourableness of their soil and climate, should be able to sell so much grain, or other rude produce of the soil, at a low price, as to enable them to cloath themselves well, and to purchase the other elegancies, conveniencies, and superfluities of life. —This, it is well known, is actually the case at present with some of the British colonies in America, where the price of labour is very high, although the price of grain is extremely low *.

SIMILAR effects may be, and actually *are*, in some measure, experienced in Europe,

* I am sensible that other circumstances concur to heighten the price of Labour in America. But it is evident, a case similar to that mentioned in the text, would produce the effects there mentioned without any of these ; so that if the price of labour is affected by any other peculiarities, these would form other exceptions to the general rule of Dr. Smith.

from

from causes in some measure resembling the above.

LET us suppose there is a particular country where few of the common manufactures for cloathing, or others of as indispensable use, are carried on, and where the inhabitants are supplied with these necessary articles from other countries; the price of corn, and the other rude produce of the fields, may be here extremely low, and manufactures of all sorts, and taxes of every kind, so very high, as to force these necessary articles to bear a very high proportion in the ordinary expences of a family, to that of bread-corn: In this case it would be these extraneous articles, and not the price of grain, that would chiefly regulate the price of labour in that country.

THIS is in some measure the case with most of the distant corn-counties in Scotland, where few manufactures of common useful necessities have been established, in which places the price of labour is very high in proportion to the average-prices of grain.

It is easy for us to figure to ourselves another case, in which corn might continue to be
very

very low-priced, without producing a proportional lowness in the rate of labour.

If, while the rude produce of the country, or those articles that were necessary for carrying on those manufactures of indispensable necessity, were highly taxed; and, notwithstanding these draw-backs, the inhabitants, instead of importing them from abroad, should be in the practice of manufacturing them at home, although still strangers to all those numerous inventions for abridging labour, and simplifying the severe operations of the artisan, by dividing the several operations into distinct parts, and allotting to each labourer his own particular task, and thus making them all co-operate with one another in producing a much more perfect whole, and at a much smaller expence, than any one of them could have singly effected;—their manufactures would not only be rude in fashion, but also intrinsically of smaller value, although at the same time they could not be afforded to the buyer but at a higher price. In these circumstances, all the manufactures needed in a family must be higher than the proportional price of the grain would seem to require; so that this part of family-expences

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would bear a much higher proportion to that of its food, than in other countries, where manufactures were carried on in a more perfect manner.

IN countries, too, that are thinly peopled, where buyers are few, and market-places at a great distance from one another, the very expence of going to fetch the articles necessary for a family, becomes a heavy tax upon the inhabitants: and the difficulty he finds in procuring the things he may have use for when he needs them, puts the householder to the necessity of buying at one time what he may not have use for till some time afterwards; which, in perishable commodities, is always attended with loss; and, in other cases, it occasions an inconvenient outlay of stock, which is attended with no small hardship to a poor man: and if to this be added the incomplete assortment of goods that can be found in the shops, which compels the inhabitant to buy, not the very thing he needs, but that only which approaches towards it, although perhaps it shall be both more expensive, and much less proper for the purpose he wants; and if it be likewise considered, that as the retailers in these circumstances cannot
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have a quick sale, they are obliged to exact, and, having few competitors, are enabled to obtain a much greater profit upon the articles in which they deal, than they could have got in a more populous district; it must follow, that the inhabitants so situated will be obliged to pay much above their natural value for all necessary articles, grain only excepted; so that these necessities, rather than the price of grain, will regulate the price of labour.

It is on account of these little circumstances, so often overlooked by politicians and men of high rank, although so sensibly felt by those in lower spheres of life, that it is universally found, that the expence of housekeeping is much higher in distant corners of the country, where industry has not yet taken firm footing, and where the price of grain, and other rude produce of the soil, continues very low, than a superficial observer would at first sight expect to find it:—and it is on account of the vast convenience that manufacturers find, from having access at all times to a good market, where they can get a perfect assortment of all things they want;—and the very great saving that accrues to them by being able to find the exact thing that suits the purpose they want in the most

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most perfect manner,—where they can buy even a single nail of the particular size and shape that suits them, without being obliged to purchase the smallest superfluity, that it is found a labourer will often live more comfortably, and be able to afford his work a good deal cheaper, in a populous thriving place, than in one that is poor, and thinly inhabited, although the price of grain, and all the rude produce of the soil, shall be much cheaper in the last place than in the first. It is chiefly on this account that manufactures are in general cheaper in Holland than in most countries of Europe, notwithstanding the very high taxes that are laid upon almost every article of life, and the very high price of all kinds of food in that country.

THE low price of grain, therefore, will not necessarily ensure cheapness of labour in any country;—it is the invigorating spirit of industry alone that can ensure that blessing in any situation whatever.

I HAVE been at pains to develop the above circumstances more fully than perhaps would have been strictly necessary for illustrating our general argument,—with a particular view to
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make this circumstance be attended to by any of those public-spirited men who may attempt at present to establish any extensive manufacture in any remote corner of the country.

It deserves likewise to be remarked, that although the apparent price of labour is usually lower in poor countries, where the produce of the soil, and grain in general, is cheap; yet it is in fact for the most part *really* higher than in other countries. For it is not the wages that is given to a labourer per day that constitutes the *real* price of labour, although it is its *apparent* price. The *real* price is that which a certain quantity of work performed actually costs the employer; and considered in this light, labour is in almost all cases cheaper in rich countries than in those that are poorer, although the price of grain, and other provisions, is usually much lower in the last than in the first. Mr. Smeaton, in giving in his estimate of the expence of making the canal from Carron to Dunbarton, subjoins a note to the following effect:—That although the above estimate is what the same quantity of work could be performed for in England;—yet, from whatever cause it might arise, he thought it necessary to observe, that he had always found it required

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quired (I think) about a fourth part more money to execute the same quantity of labour in Scotland, so that an allowance ought to be made on that account. It is well known, however, that labour estimated by *the day*, is much lower in Scotland than in England; and that grain, and other rude produce of the field, is also cheaper. But Mr. Smeaton's experience has taught him, that labour *by the piece* is in general cheaper in England. My own experience corroborates that of Mr. Smeaton: for where I now live, the wages of a labourer per day is about a fourth lower than where I first practised farming; but the price of any piece of work is in general between one fourth and one third higher.

I MUST, therefore, again repeat it, that the low price of grain does not necessarily ensure cheapness of labour; for in all those cases where a habit of industry has not been fully established, the price of labour must needs be very high in proportion to the average-prices of grain.

THIS may often be the case, even where manufactures are established, and carried on in a flourishing way. For if the inhabitants, instead

stead of applying themselves to the manufacturing such things as are of daily use for themselves and families, should be busily engaged in working up foreign materials into manufactures for distant markets, it would follow, that all these manufacturers would themselves depend on distant countries for the ordinary supply of cloathing, which they would be enabled to purchase with the money they earned by their own labour; and if the merchants found they had great profits by selling these manufactures in distant markets, they would naturally overbid one another, so as to raise the price of labour; and if the price of labour was much augmented, the people employed upon these manufactures would have much money to be employed in purchasing foreign luxuries, which would in time come to be necessaries almost as much as grain itself. In these circumstances, it is plain the price of grain could have but a very small influence in regulating the price of labour, or influencing the profits of the manufactures, as this would constitute but a very small part of their ordinary expences.

ON the contrary, it is sufficiently evident, that the price of manufactures must necessarily influence, and even in some measure regulate,
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the price of grain, in a situation similar to the above. For if the grain should continue as low as before these manufactures were established, the farmer would find his profit so inconsiderable in proportion to that of the manufacturing labourer, as to be induced to desert that employment, and by an imperfect or less general culture, raise the price of corn, till he should reap a profit from agriculture in some measure proportioned to that obtained in other trades. This I have already had occasion to observe is in a great measure the present state of Aberdeenshire; and a bad arrangement it is.

THAT the price of manufactures, and the rate of mercantile profit, must in all cases influence in a certain degree the price of grain, instead of being entirely regulated by it, seems to be tacitly allowed by Dr. Smith, when he admits, that the money-price of grain must be affected by the general decrease in the value of silver that has taken place in Europe in consequence of the discovery of America. For if this shall be admitted, it must be granted, that this extraordinary influx of money that comes into any country, and thus degrades the value of specie there, can only find its way thither
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in return for the manufactures * sent abroad to those countries where the money more abounds; which manufactures, by procuring in return to the merchant a greater quantity of silver than formerly, enables him in his turn to encrease the wages of the manufacturer; in consequence of which extraordinary prices, some part of the ordinary labour will be turned from agriculture towards manufactures, till the price of grain shall gradually rise so as to afford the farmer a reasonable profit.

I CONCEIVE it impossible to show in what other way the price of grain can be affected by the decrease in the value of silver.—But in this case it cannot be denied, that the price of grain, instead of regulating the rate of labour, and price of manufactures, has been regulated by these. It seems to me, that they mutually influence and regulate one another: for if the profits in any trade are, from accidental circumstances, greater than in another, a quantity of stock and labour will be withdrawn from

* The money might be brought into the country also in exchange for the rude produce of the soil alone;—but as this has never happened in any European country, except perhaps Poland, I have entirely omitted it in the text, to avoid unnecessary distinctions.

the one, and applied to the other, till the balance is restored to its proper equilibrium.

THESE positions appear to me so very plain and self-evident, and at the same time are so incompatible with the idea that Dr. Smith's reasoning about the regulating influence of corn, and the other consequences he deduces from it, as well as to several passages in other parts of his work, that I am under some apprehension that I do not fully comprehend his meaning on this head: but as others may be equally at a loss with myself, and as his reasoning seems to lead to false conclusions, others, as well as I, may draw these conclusions from his doctrine until it is more clearly explained; which will, I hope, be a sufficient excuse for my here explaining what are my own doubts.

Dr. Smith runs a parallel between manufactures and corn in the following terms. "When,
 " either by the monopoly of the home market,
 " or a bounty upon exportation, you enable our
 " woollen or linen manufacturers to sell their
 " goods for somewhat a better price than they
 " otherwise could get for them, you raise, not
 " only the *nominal*, but the *real* price of those
 Vol. II. N " goods.

“ goods. You render them equal to a greater
“ quantity of labour and subsistence; you en-
“ crease, not only the nominal, but the real
“ profit, the real wealth and revenue of those
“ manufacturers, and you enable them either
“ to live better themselves, or to employ a
“ greater quantity of labour in those particular
“ manufactures. You really encourage those
“ manufactures, and direct towards them a
“ greater quantity of the industry of the coun-
“ try, than what would probably go to them
“ of its own accord. But when, by the like
“ institutions, you raise the *nominal* or *money*
“ price of corn, you do not raise its *real* value;
“ you do not encrease the real wealth, the
“ real revenue either of our farmers or country-
“ gentlemen; you do not encourage the growth
“ of corn, because you do not enable them to
“ maintain and employ more labourers in rais-
“ ing it. The nature of things has stamped
“ upon corn a real value which no human in-
“ stitution can alter. No bounty upon expor-
“ tation, no monopoly of the home market,
“ can raise it; the freest competition cannot
“ lower it. *Through the world in general, that*
“ *value is equal to the quantity of labour which it*
“ *can maintain; and in every particular place*
“ *it is equal to the quantity of labour which*
“ it

“ it can maintain in the way, whether liberal,
 “ moderate, or scanty, in which labour is com-
 “ monly maintained in that place. Woollen
 “ or linen cloth are not the regulating commo-
 “ dities by which the value of all other com-
 “ modities must be finally measured and deter-
 “ mined, corn is. The real value of every
 “ other commodity is finally measured and de-
 “ termined by the proportion which its average
 “ money-price bears to the average money-
 “ price of corn*.”

I FRANKLY acknowledge, that after having bestowed all the attention I am able upon the above passage, I cannot clearly perceive what it means. At first view it seems to indicate some mysterious immutability in the nature of the value of corn which is peculiar to itself, and therefore sets at defiance all attempts that may be made to alter that value.—But upon a nearer examination, it seems impossible to admit of this meaning. Let us endeavour to develope our ideas on this head.

THE real value of any commodity in a civilized and commercial state, when speaking in a commercial style, free from all metaphysical sub-

tilty, I understand to be, the quantity of the necessaries or superfluities of life, or, if you will, the quantity of subsistence, which that particular commodity is able to procure to the person who possesses it. But in commercial countries, where all commodities are readily exchanged for money, the quantity of that universal medium that can be obtained for any particular commodity will indicate exactly its real value to the possessor: for it will not be denied, that the more money he can draw for it, the more subsistence it will enable him to purchase with it. In common language, therefore, and seemingly with strict propriety, the quantity of money any commodity can procure, is called its price; and its real value is estimated by the amount of that price.

THIS, however, it would appear, cannot be the *real value* of corn mentioned in the above passage, which *no human institution can alter*, &c.—For in this sense it is plain, that the *real value* of corn may be altered by a thousand different circumstances*.

CONSIDERED

* In the above passage there seems always to be a contrast implied between the *real* and the *nominal* price of corn. It is, however, certain, that the *nominal* and *real* price of any

CONSIDERED in this light also, there could not be any essential difference established between the nature of corn and other commodities, which

any thing must at all times be exactly the same, unless in the following circumstances.

First, if the price of any commodity, at one period of time, be compared with its price at another period, their *nominal* value may be the same, although their *real* price may be very different; because the price of the common standard by which they are compared, may have been different at these two periods; that is, the value of silver may have increased or decreased in that time, so that an equal quantity of *it* might have been able to purchase more of any other commodities at one of these periods than the other.

Secondly, The same variation may take place between the *nominal* and *real* value of any commodity at the same period in different countries; because the value of money may be higher in the one of these countries than in the other; by which means the same quantity of silver may purchase a greater quantity of goods in the one case than in the other.

Thirdly, The value of the same nominal quantity of silver, may be different at different periods, or in different countries, by giving the same denomination to pieces of silver of different weights in these different circumstances; so that the same nominal sum of money shall express a greater weight of silver in the one case than in the other.

In all these ways may a variation take place between the *nominal* and the *real* value of any commodity. But in all these cases the commodity whose value is mentioned, must be compared with others, either at *different periods of time*, or in *different countries*; for it is impossible but the *nominal* value of any commodity, that is, the quantity of money it is

which is fully implied above; for the *real value* of corn, as well as of every other commodity, is, in this sense, the price it will bring in a public market. This, therefore, cannot be the meaning of it.

THERE is another way in which mankind sometimes estimate the *real value* of a thing, viz. by comparing its value with that of other commodities, not only in the home market, but in all other parts of the world. In this sense, however, we are farther from our purpose than before; because the real value of grain considered in this light, would admit of greater variations than that of almost any other commodity; as it may happen, that the money which can be procured for an equal quantity of grain

is able to purchase, must be exactly the same with its *real value*, considered in a commercial view, when compared with the other commodities in the same country at the time.

It will perhaps occur to the reader, that every difficulty would disappear, and that Dr. Smith's reasoning would be here plain and consistent, if we were to suppose, that the price of grain had such an immediate influence on that of all other commodities, as necessarily to make the nominal price of each of these, on all occasions, to rise and fall with every fluctuation in the price of grain. But this is a supposition so directly contrary to experience, that it would be an insult on Dr. Smith to suppose we should understand it in that way.

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in one country, shall be extremely different from what could be procured for it in another; and therefore the quantity of subsistence it could procure from any third country to the different original proprietors, would be exceedingly dissimilar. This, therefore, cannot be the meaning.

"THROUGH the whole world, (says he), in general that value is equal to the quantity of labour it can maintain." But neither do we here meet with the discriminating circumstance we are in search of. By the word *maintain* can be meant nothing else than *procure* immediately in exchange either for *itself in substance*, or for *its price*, which is the same thing; so that it might be equally read, the quantity of labour it can *purchase*. But is it not equally true, that through the whole world the value of a yard of cloth, or a paper of pins, is equal to the quantity of labour it can purchase? In this sense, the value of every commodity would be equally immutable with that of corn: for there can be no doubt, but the value of every commodity, through all the possible variations of price it may be made to undergo, will at all times be equal to the quantity of labour it can purchase; or, in other words, the value, that is, the price

price will be equal to the price. But this would be a play upon words, or rather a jingling of words, without meaning, that we cannot suppose Dr. Smith could be capable of employing.

I AM further confirmed in the idea that I do not comprehend the meaning of the passage quoted above about the immutable value of corn, from observing, that Dr. Smith, in other passages, reasons about the means of encouraging or discouraging agriculture, and raising or depressing the value of grain, in proportion to that of other commodities, exactly in the same manner as any other man would do, who viewed this as a manufacture that admitted of being encouraged or depressed by wholesome or foolish regulations, in the same manner as any other manufacture *.

IF

* "When a landed nation," (says he, p. 296), "on the contrary, oppresses either by high duties, or by prohibitions, the trade of foreign nations, it necessarily hurts its own interest in two different ways. First, By raising the price of all foreign goods, and of all sorts of manufactures, it necessarily sinks the real value of the surplus produce of its own land, with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which, it purchases those foreign goods and manufactures. Secondly,

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IF the reasoning of Dr. Smith about the pernicious tendency of the bounty on corn has been

“condly, By giving a sort of monopoly of the home market to its own merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, it raises the rate of mercantile and manufacturing profit in proportion to that of agricultural profit; and, consequently, either draws from agriculture a part of the capital which had been employed in it, or hinders from going to it a part of what would otherwise have gone to it. This policy, therefore, discourages agriculture in two ways: first, *by sinking the real value of its produce*, and thereby lowering the rate of its profit; and, secondly, by raising the rate of profit in all other employments.”

But if “the nature of things has stamped upon corn a real value which no human institution can alter,” how would it be possible for the above-mentioned arrangement, “necessarily to sink the real value of the surplus produce of the land?”

Or if “the money-price of corn regulates that of all other commodities,” whence comes it that by the above arrangement the rise in the price of manufactures “necessarily sinks the value of the produce of the land?” for in this case it is the manufactures that regulate the price of corn, and not the corn that regulates the price of the manufactures.

“The inhabitants of the town (he also observes, p. 286,) draws from the country the rude produce which constitutes both the materials of their work, and the fund of their subsistence; and they pay for this rude produce by sending back to the country a certain portion of it manufactured and prepared for immediate use. The trade which is carried on between these two different sets of people, consists ultimately in a certain quantity of rude produce
“exchanged

been unsatisfactory, it will be found that he is still more unlucky with regard to the facts that

“ exchanged for a certain quantity of manufactured pro-
 “ duce. *The dearer the latter, therefore, the cheaper the*
 “ *former*; and whatever tends in any country to raise the
 “ price of manufactured produce, tends to lower that of the
 “ rude produce of the land, and thereby to discourage agri-
 “ culture. The smaller the quantity of manufactured pro-
 “ duce which any quantity of given produce, or, what
 “ comes to the same thing, which the price of any quan-
 “ tity of rude produce, is capable of purchasing; *the smal-*
 “ *ler the real value of that given rude produce*, the smaller
 “ the encouragement which either the landlord has to en-
 “ crease its quantity by improving, or the farmer by culti-
 “ vating the land. Whatever, besides, tends to diminish
 “ in any country the number of artificers and manufactu-
 “ rers, tends to diminish the home market, the most im-
 “ portant of all markets, for the rude produce of the land,
 “ and thereby still farther to discourage agriculture.”

I own it appears to me a little strange, that the money-
 price of corn, “ which regulates the price of all other com-
 “ modities,” p. 94. should now be lower in proportion as
 the price of manufactured produce is higher.—Equally
 strange it is, that “ the real value of the rude produce of
 “ the land should fall lower as the price of manufactured
 “ goods rises higher;” seeing that “ neither the bounty,
 “ nor any other human institution, can have any such ef-
 “ fect.” p. 93. “ No bounty upon exportation, no mo-
 “ nopoly of the home market can raise it. The freest
 “ competition cannot lower it. The nature of things has
 “ stamped upon corn a *real* value, which no human insti-
 “ tution can alter.” p. 101.—If it be true, that “ the
 “ smaller quantity of manufactured produce, which
 “ any quantity of rude produce, or the price of that
 “ rude produce, is capable of purchasing, the smallest

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ought to support it: for these, instead of corroborating his hypothesis, oppose it in the most direct manner.

“ the real value of that given rude produce; and
 “ the smaller the encouragement which either the landlord
 “ has to encrease its quantity by improving, or the farmer
 “ by cultivating the soil,” p. 286; can it likewise be true,
 that when “ you raise the nominal or money price of corn,
 “ you do not raise its real value? you do not encrease the
 “ real wealth, the real revenue, either of our farmers or
 “ country-gentlemen? you do not encourage the growth
 “ of corn, because you do not enable them to employ more
 “ labourers in raising it?” p. 101. Is not the *real* value
 of that rude produce, the same with the *nominal* value, or
 price it will bring in money in proportion to that which
 can be obtained for other goods?

If, again, it be true, that “ agriculture may be dis-
 “ couraged” by having the price of manufactured goods
 raised, and thus “ lowering the value of the rude produce
 “ of the land,” will it not follow that a contrary effect
 would result from an opposite conduct? And if the land-
 lord, by this depression of the price of the rude produce of
 his soil, “ will be discouraged from encreasing the quan-
 “ tity (of grain) by improving, or the farmer by cultivat-
 “ ing his land,” does it not necessarily follow, that by
 raising the price of their rude produce, the farmer would
 be induced to cultivate, and the landlord to improve his
 soil, and both of them thus help to encrease its quantity?
 How then can we be induced to believe, that the bounty,
 which, in Dr. Smith’s opinion, always tends to raise the
 price of grain, “ can in no respect promote the raising of
 “ that particular commodity of which it was meant to en-
 “ courage the production?” p. 102. See also pages 455,
 465. 486. 488. &c. in which arguments of the same sort
 with those above occur.

Not

Not to lay any stress on the great fluctuation in the price of grain that used to take place in the British market of old, nor of the extraordinary height to which it rose on some occasions, as already taken notice of, it is enough for our present purpose to rest barely upon the acknowledged depression in the price of grain that has taken place in England since the bounty was granted; as this alone seems to furnish an unanswerable argument against the hypothesis he has adopted.

It will hardly be denied, that the value of the precious metals hath decreased in Britain since the law granting a bounty on corn was enacted; and that, by consequence, the price of almost every commodity has risen proportionally in that period. But corn since that time has decreased even in its *nominal* value; it has therefore decreased in its *real* value in a much higher proportion.—Whence, I ask, arises this singular exception to the general rule, if it is not to be ascribed to the influence of the bounty?

THIS objection did not escape the attention of Dr. Smith: but he seems to have disregarded it so much, as hardly to think it required a serious

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serious answer; as the only one he has assigned, will hardly be admitted as such.

"THE improvement," says he, "and prosperity of Great Britain, which has been so often ascribed to those laws (the corn-laws), may be very easily accounted for from other causes. That security which the laws of Great Britain give to every man that he shall enjoy the fruits of his own labour, is alone sufficient to make any country flourish, *notwithstanding these, and twenty other absurd regulations of commerce*: and this security was perfected by the revolution, much about the same time that the bounty was established*."

BUT this does not seem to solve the difficulty. For if the farmer, in consequence of that general security, has been enabled to cultivate his ground better than formerly;—has not the manufacturer, by the same security, been enabled to carry on his business to greater perfection also?—and if the farmer *now*, in consequence of that security, sells his corn cheaper than before;—ought not the manufacturer, on a double account, viz. first on

* p. 127.

account of that general security; — and secondly, because of the low price of bread-corn, to sell his manufactured goods still cheaper, in proportion than the farmer?

ON another account, still, ought the manufacturer to have lowered the price of his manufactures still farther than the farmer that of his grain, if no other cause but the general security could have operated in producing this change in the country. For Dr. Smith himself justly observes *, that “the improvements in the productive powers of useful labour, depend, first, upon the improvement in the ability of the workman; and, secondly, upon that of the machinery with which he works. But the labour of artificers and manufacturers, as it is capable of being more sub-divided, and the labour of each workman reduced to a greater simplicity of operation, than that of farmers and country-labourers, is likewise capable of both these improvements in a higher degree.”

THIS general security, therefore, ought to have lowered the price of every other manu-

* P. 275.

facture in a much higher proportion than that of grain: — But the price of almost every manufacture has encreased considerably since that period, while that of grain has decreased; — therefore it cannot be ascribed to that cause.

AGAIN, — If the bounty on corn had tended to raise the price of that commodity, “both in times of plenty and in times of scarcity also,” — it must naturally have followed, that the average price of grain on those places of the sea-coast from whence the greatest exportation always takes place, should be higher than in those parts of the country which are so situated as hardly to admit of being affected by the bounty. — This, however, is so far from being the case, that circumstances are directly the reverse. — For it appears, by the prices of grain that have been published by authority in the Gazette for several years past, that when wheat in the counties of Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, from which counties almost all the exports from England are made), is about 4 s. per bushel; in the inland counties of Wiltshire, the internal parts of Somersetshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, &c. it sells at an average about

about 5s. 6d. or 6s. per bushel. This fact, therefore militates as directly against the hypothesis of Dr. Smith as the former.

I SHALL just beg leave to produce one other fact in opposition to this hypothesis, which is of such importance as it would be inexcusable in me to omit.

ACCORDING to his mode of reasoning, if two kingdoms could be found that were alike in other respects and only differed in this, That a bounty on exportation of corn was allowed of in the one, in consequence of which much corn was exported, whereas in the other that bounty either was not allowed of, or had never been claimed; the price of grain should have risen much higher in proportion to that of other manufactures in the first than in the last.

ENGLAND and SCOTLAND furnish us with an opportunity of making the comparison. For both of these are governed so much after the same manner, and have had the general security of the subject protected so much alike, that we can hardly mention a circumstance of great moment that is not common to both, unless it be the influence of the corn-laws. For
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although the bounty has produced great effects in England, it is believed there never was a shilling paid of bounty on exported corn from Scotland *; therefore the price of corn ought to have risen much more in England since this law was enacted, than it has done in Scotland during the same period.—How does the fact stand?

It is allowed on all hands, that the average money-price of corn has fallen considerably in those counties in England from which corn may be exported, since the bounty took place. —To ascertain what was the case in this respect in Scotland, I applied for an extract of the price of meal by the *fiars*† of Aberdeenshire, from

* To prevent cavils as to this article, the reader is desired to take notice, that whatever may possibly have been the case in other parts of Scotland, I am well authorised to affirm, that no bounty was ever paid for grain or meal exported from the port of Aberdeen; so that the reasoning from the following table cannot be affected by what may have happened at other places.

† For the sake of the English reader it may be necessary to inform him, that the word *fiars* in Scotland means the legal average prices of grain, which are ascertained every year in each county by the sheriff; who, in the month of March, summons a certain number of country-gentlemen and farmers, and an equal number of dealers in grain, who

from the sheriff's books in that county, as far back as they could be obtained quite regular, which was from the year 1705 to 1775, both inclusive, as is expressed in the following table; which is divided into periods of ten years each, with the average price of each period computed*.

form a sort of jury, having power to examine, upon oath, any persons they incline, with regard to the prices that have been already given for grain of the preceding crop, and the probable prices that may be expected for the remainder of the season; from all which they fix on a price as near the medium selling-price as they can; which serves as a standard for factors and curators counting with their constituents or wards.

* The prices here mentioned are all in Scots money: of which one pound is equal to one shilling and eight pence Sterling; a shilling Scots equal to a penny Sterling; and a penny Scots equal to one twelfth of a penny Sterling.—Hence the first-mentioned price, 3*l.* Scots, is equal to 5*s.* Sterling; and so of the others.

A TABLE,

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A TABLE*, shewing the price of Oat-meal in Aberdeenshire, from the year 1705 to 1775, both inclusive.
Extracted from the Sheriff's book of Fairs for that county.
Price. Average. Price. Average. Price. Average.

A TABLE*, shewing the price of Oat-meal in Aberdeenshire, from the year 1705 to 1775, both inclusive.
 Extracted from the Sheriff's book of Fairs for that county.

A.D.	Price. L. s. d.	Average. L. s. d.	A.D.	Price. L. s. d.	Average. L. s. d.	A.D.	Price. L. s. d.	Average. L. s. d.	A.D.	Price. L. s. d.	Average. L. s. d.	A.D.	Price. L. s. d.	Average. L. s. d.
1705	3 0 0		1725	4 16 8		1745	6 13 4		1765	8 8 0		1785	8 8 0	
1706	2 13 4		1726	4 6 8		1746	4 16 0		1766	8 0 0		1786	8 0 0	
1707	3 6 8		1727	4 13 4		1747	3 16 0		1767	7 0 0		1787	7 0 0	
1708	4 13 4		1728	5 13 4		1748	4 13 4		1768	5 16 0		1788	5 16 0	
1709	5 0 0	3 16 9½	1729	4 13 4	4 10 8	1749	4 3 4	5 4 6½	1769	6 0 0	7 13 0	1789	6 0 0	
1710	5 0 0		1730	4 3 4		1750	4 13 4		1770	7 10 0		1790	7 10 0	
1711	3 6 8		1731	4 13 4		1751	6 13 4		1771	8 8 0		1791	8 8 0	
1712	3 0 0		1732	3 6 8		1752	6 13 4		1772	8 14 0		1792	8 14 0	
1713	4 0 0		1733	4 6 8		1753	5 10 0		1773	8 0 0		1793	8 0 0	
1714	4 8 0		1734	4 13 4		1754	4 13 4		1774	8 14 0		1794	8 14 0	
1715	3 6 8		1735	5 6 8		1755	6 6 8		From	to	Average.	Rise.		
1716	3 6 8		1736	4 13 0		1756	8 0 0		1705	1715	3 16 9½	0 3 6½		
1717	4 3 4		1737	4 13 0		1757	7 4 0		1715	1725	4 0 4	0 10 4		
1718	4 3 4		1738	3 13 0		1758	4 6 8		1725	1735	4 10 3	0 6 7½		
1719	4 6 8	4 0 4	1739	5 6 8	4 17 3½	1759	3 16 0	5 17 4	1735	1745	4 17 3½	0 7 1½		
1720	3 10 0		1740	7 0 0		1760	4 0 0		1745	1755	5 4 6½	0 7 2½		
1721	3 10 0		1741	5 6 8		1761	4 10 0		1755	1765	5 17 4	0 12 9½		
1722	5 0 0		1742	4 0 0		1762	8 0 0		1765	1775	13 0	1 15 8		
1723	5 10 0		1743	3 4 0		1763	5 10 0		Rise fr. 1705 to 1775	3 16 3½				
1724	3 6 8		1744	5 10 0		1764	7 0 0		Average before 1715	3 16 9½				

* This Table is divided into three columns : — 1. The Year ; — 2. The Price of Oat-meal per Boll of eight stone ; — 3. The Average prices every ten years.

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FROM this table it appears, that instead of falling, as in England, the prices have gradually risen during all that period, nearly in the same proportion with the prices of almost every other commodity in that kingdom, in consequence of the decrease of the value of money, occasioned by the increase of trade, &c. in that time.—Corn, therefore, in this country, is affected by the general decrease of the value of money, as well as every other commodity; but, in England, the nominal price of corn has at least remained stationary, while that of all other commodities has been nearly doubled; for which I apprehend it is impossible to assign any other satisfactory reason but the operation of the corn laws.

To conclude,—It is certain, that if no overruling influence had prevented it, the price of grain would have risen in England, in the same proportion with that of all other commodities, in consequence of the general decrease in the value of money:—but the price of grain has not only not risen since the bounty was instituted, as has been the case with almost all other commodities, but has even fallen since that period: therefore it has been kept thus
dispro-

disproportionately low by the powerful overruling influence of some cause.

If this effect had been produced by the general security, as to property, that the subject now enjoys in Great Britain, the same cause would have operated still more powerfully in moderating the price of labour and manufactures.—But the price of labour and of manufactures has encreased since that period;—it must therefore be attributed to some other cause.

If “the bounty had always raised the *nominal* price of grain *,” that article of produce must have had its nominal value augmented, not only as much, but even more than that of any other commodity, since the bounty took place.—But the *nominal* value of that commodity has decreased since that time, while that of almost all other commodities has encreased; therefore the bounty on corn has not encreased its nominal value.

If “the price of corn had absolutely regulated the price of all other commodities †,” the

* p. 93. *et passim*.

† P. 101.

price of every other commodity must by consequence rise or fall, as the general average money-price of corn rises or falls in any country. But the average money-price of corn in England has been lower since the bounty took place, than it was before that period, although the price of almost all other commodities is now higher than formerly ; therefore the price of corn does not absolutely regulate the price of labour and of all other commodities.

If “ it is impossible to alter the *real* price of corn by any contrivance †,” and if “ the real price of any commodity be the quantity of labour it can maintain or procure ‡ ;” it must follow, that the price of one determinate quantity of corn will, at all times, and in all places, be capable of purchasing an equal quantity of labour : — but as it requires a much greater quantity of money *now* to purchase the same quantity of manufactures, or of labour, than it did fifty years ago ; and as the same quantity of corn cannot at this time purchase so much money as before the bounty took place ; — it follows, that the *real* price of corn is much lower at present than it was at some former period ; — therefore it is possible to augment or di-

† P. 101.

‡ P. 286.

minish the *real* value of corn, as well as of every other commodity.

BUT if the *nominal* value of corn has decreased since the bounty was established; and if, in consequence of that, its *real* price be not now much more than one half of what it formerly was; and if no other probable cause can be assigned for this but the operation of the bounty, and the other corn laws; and if these laws explain in a satisfactory manner all the phenomena above enumerated; we shall then be obliged to acknowledge, that instead of being "an absurd regulation of commerce," it is perhaps the wisest and the best political institution that has ever graced the annals of any nation.

I AM happy, in the close of these very long remarks, to be able to concur entirely with this very sensible author, with regard to the very great utility of an unlimited freedom on all occasions to the internal commerce of grain. Without this assistance, the bounty can produce but a very limited and partial effect in regulating the price of grain, or benefiting the country. — Every law, therefore, which tends in the most distant manner to cramp the internal commerce

commerce of grain, as it is alike prejudicial to the interests of agriculture and manufactures, and by consequence to every individual of the state, ought to be instantly repealed.—These laws are badges of the ignorance of our forefathers, which we should endeavour, as soon as possible, to bury in oblivion. Whatever tends to render the internal corn-merchant secure in his person and property, and to facilitate the commerce, and easy transportation of grain from place to place, is highly beneficial, as it tends in a lesser degree to give the same stability to the internal market of the country, that the bounty necessarily would procure upon the sea-coast. The reasoning of Dr. Smith on this branch of the subject is just, clear, and convincing. To it therefore I refer the curious reader for farther satisfaction: —it deserves in particular the serious attention of every person who is concerned in the legislative council of the nation.

I HAVE heard of no country that has adopted a similar plan of legislation with regard to the commerce of corn with that of England; —nor are there many countries to which it could be so beneficial if a similar system should be adopted; for, on account of the small dimensions

mentions of our island, few places are so far removed from the sea-coast, as not to feel in a lesser or greater degree the effects of the demand that may arise from that cause.

THE great importance of the subject agitated in this postscript, together with the very high opinion that the public justly entertain of the respectable author whose opinions I have been obliged to controvert, will, I hope, plead my excuse for the very great length of this article. In disquisitions of such an important nature as the present, no man who treats of them is excusable, if he allows any opinion to pass uncontroverted, which, according to his opinion, may be erroneous; nor is it allowable in him to use short and obscure hints, that may be only understood by men of genius and reflection, but plain arguments, that may be, if possible, within the reach of all.—This necessarily leads to tediousness.—If I have used the freedom to criticise another, I shall hope to meet with the same treatment myself wherever I have erred.—It is of no moment to the public *who* it is that shall be right, or who is in the wrong; but it may be of high importance to the nation, that

that the truth in this case should be with certainty discovered.

I SHALL just beg leave to add a few words with regard to the corn-laws of Scotland, before I conclude this important digression.

Of the CORN-LAWS with regard to Scotland.

SCOTLAND has hardly been as yet in any respect benefited by the British corn-laws; as these laws have never yet been properly adapted to the nature and circumstances of that part of the island.

WHEAT is the principal crop in England, for which there is an extensive market in Europe at large, at all times. But from the natural barrenness of Scotland in general, oats has ever been the principal crop of that part of the island; and this kind of grain must long continue to furnish food to the lower ranks of people in it. But the great bulk, and very low price of oats, renders it a far less proper article of export than wheat; and as the sale of *that kind of grain* is confined to a
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very few places on the continent; there never has been a steady demand for it abroad; so that when accidental plenty comes, there is no ready vent for it. Merchants in that article would not have employment at all times, and therefore cannot be readily found when most needed; and the country experiences nearly the same inequalities in the price of grain as if no bounty had ever been granted upon exporting it from Scotland. And indeed the law with regard to this particular is so injudiciously framed, as to be incapable of producing any beneficial effects at all, as a slight review of the corn-laws of Scotland will plainly show.

By the statute 13th George III. cap. 43. it is enacted, That oats or oat-meal may be imported into *any port of Great Britain*, when the price is at or above 14 s. per quarter. But by a subsequent clause of the same statute, it is expressly ordained, That it shall not be lawful to import any oats or oat-meal into Scotland, while the price of middling oats is not at or above 16 s. per Scots boll, which is nearly the same as 22 s. per quarter. By this law, therefore, although oats may be imported into England whenever the price is above 14 s. they

they cannot be imported into Scotland till the price is at least 22 s. per quarter. What was the reason for this extraordinary difference, it is difficult to say, unless it was intended to raise the price of grain in Scotland in scarce years, to such a rate as to create a sort of famine. And I have already had occasion to show, p. 102, that this regulation must necessarily tend to hurt the interest of the farmer, and country-gentleman, whom it seems to have been intended to serve.

By the same statute it is declared, That when the price of middling oats is at 14s. per quarter, or under, it shall be lawful to export oats; and that a bounty of 2s. shall be granted for every quarter of oats, and of 2s. and 6d. for every quarter of oat-meal, then exported, reckoning 276 lb. Troas a quarter of oat-meal; that is to say, when middling oats sell for 10 s. 4 d. per Scots boll, or under, in Scotland, a bounty of about 1 s. 4 d. per boll, shall be allowed on exporting oats or oat-meal, reckoning eight stone Amsterdam a boll, and nothing more. This bounty cannot tend to relieve the farmer, as the price at which it may be claimed is too low,

low, and as the bounty itself is too inconsiderable to produce any sensible effect; nor has it ever, that I know of, been claimed in any one instance.

By these absurd regulations, a provision is made to prevent the possibility of moderating the price of grain in Scotland in years of scarcity, and no effectual provision is made for opening a foreign market, and keeping the price reasonably high, in years of plenty; which must subject the inhabitants to all the grievous inconveniencies that arise from great and sudden fluctuations in the price of this necessary article of life. Far better would it have been to have allowed Scotland to remain on the same footing with England, as to the commerce of oats, than to have added the destructive clause against the importation of oats to that country: for although the bounty is too inconsiderable to give any assistance to the farmer, the other inhabitants would at least have been able to get bread-corn on some occasions cheaper than at present, and the farmer would have been in less danger of being ruined by offering immoderate rents, in hopes of obtaining always the high monopoly price for grain.

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I AM far, however, from wishing to see the regulations in England with respect to the commerce of oats implicitly adopted in Scotland, as this would at best be only exchanging one imperfect regulation for another. Oats, it ought always to be remembered, is the principal crop in Scotland. It is far otherwise in England; and therefore that kind of corn requires less to be attended to by the legislature there than here. The nature of different countries too with regard to fertility, situation, &c. will often make a particular regulation as to the commerce of grain, extremely prudent for the one, that would be very improper for the other; and therefore the circumstances of each ought to be peculiarly attended to in forming laws for regulating this kind of commerce.

I HAVE frequently had occasion to observe, that the great use of a bounty is to regulate the price of grain, and to keep it as moderate, and as steady, as the nature of things will admit of. To do this effectually, there are two principal objects that ought to be chiefly attended to. The first of these is, to ascertain as nearly as possible the *intrinsic* value of each particular kind of corn in the country where the regulation is intended to be made; and the second is,

to

to ascertain the price at which the same kinds of grain can in general be sold for in any foreign market to which it may be carried, together with the expence of transporting it thither. It should be the first of these circumstances that ought to regulate the price at which importation may with propriety be admitted, and a bounty on exportation commence. It is the second that ought to regulate the amount of that bounty.

CORN cannot be reared without a certain expence of labour, nor can it be brought to market unless the cultivator receives a price sufficient to indemnify him for that expence. It is the wages of this labour necessary for producing grain that I call its *intrinsic* value.

IN a country that possesses a very fertile soil, it is evident, that the same quantity of grain may be reared, and brought to market, at a much smaller expence than in one that is more barren. The intrinsic value of the corn, therefore, must be higher in the last country than in the first; and, by consequence, the average price of corn may, with safety, be much lower in proportion to other commodities in the fertile

tile than in the barren country. If the legislature, by any regulation of commerce or police, should contrive to bring the average price of corn in a barren country lower than this real intrinsic value, the farmer would be obliged to desert that employment, the grounds would remain uncultivated, and the inhabitants would be obliged to depend on foreign nations alone for their subsistence. But as it is universally acknowledged, that the most essential riches of any country consist in the produce of the soil, any regulation that tended to diminish that produce, would be destructive; it ought, therefore to be the study of the legislature, to encourage the cultivation of the fields, so as to make the produce, if possible, sustain all its inhabitants.

In every country there are various soils, which are endued with different degrees of fertility; and hence it must happen, that the farmer who cultivates the most fertile of these, can afford to bring his corn to market at a much lower price than others who cultivate poorer fields. But if the corn that grows on these fertile spots is not sufficient fully to supply the market alone, the price will naturally be

be raised in that market to such a height, as to indemnify others for the expence of cultivating poorer soils. The farmer, however, who cultivates the rich spots, will be able to sell his corn at the same rate in the market with those who occupy poorer fields; he will, therefore, receive much more than the *intrinsic* value for the corn he rears. Many persons will, therefore, be desirous of obtaining possession of these fertile fields, and will be content to give a certain premium for an exclusive privilege to cultivate them; which will be greater or smaller according to the more or less fertility of the soil. It is this premium which constitutes what we now call *rent*; a medium by means of which the expence of cultivating soils of very different degrees of fertility may be reduced to a perfect equality.

In countries, therefore, of moderate fertility, it is prudent to fix the average price of grain at a rate high enough to enable the farmer to cultivate so much of those unfertile fields as will be sufficient to furnish grain to supply the whole inhabitants with food in the scarcest years, that thus they may never be in danger of wanting this essential necessary of life.

BUT if they rear so much grain as will sustain the whole inhabitants *in years of scarcity*, there will be much more than enough for them *in years of plenty*. A market, therefore, must be provided for this surplus produce, to prevent the unreasonable degradation of price on these occasions.

IF the country in question be more fertile than those around it, the average price in these surrounding nations will be so much higher than the intrinsic value of the grain in the home market, as will require no other encouragement than barely to allow of exportation, perhaps at all times, or whenever it falls so low as to be near the intrinsic value of the corn. This is the case with Egypt, Sicily, and Poland; in which countries grain can be reared at such a low price, as to admit of being transported to other countries at all times without any bounty.

BUT if the average prices in the surrounding nations should be nearly equal with the intrinsic value at home, it would be necessary to grant a small bounty on exportation when the prices fell too low, so as to pay the whole expence

pence of freight, &c. in transporting it to foreign markets. This is in some measure the case with England in respect of wheat at present.

BUT if the average price of grain in the neighbouring states should, in years of moderate abundance, be as low, or lower than the intrinsic worth of grain at home, the bounty ought to be so high as to repay, not only the price of freight, but also the difference between the price of grain in that foreign market, and its intrinsic value at home; otherwise it cannot be exported without loss; and by consequence the trade could not be continued. This seems to be the case with Scotland; as there is some reason to suspect, that the average price of oats and oat-meal is as low in most of the surrounding nations, as it can be afforded for in Scotland; and in some countries it is certainly lower.—It would, therefore, seem probable, that the bounty on the exportation of oats from Scotland would require to be rather higher in proportion to its value, than of the wheat in England.

I AM not sufficiently acquainted with the nature of the countries that might become the

purchasers of our superfluous grain, to be able to say precisely what the amount of that bounty ought to be; nor am I possessed of enow of facts to be able to fix with absolute certainty the rate at which that bounty should be granted. I therefore have explained the general principles upon which these regulations ought to be founded; and offer the following table, not as being absolutely right, but as an approximation towards it, which would be at least much more perfect than the present system of corn-laws; and which, if it should be found defective in any respect, might easily be altered, so as to be productive of the most beneficial effects to the country at large; and by consequence to the gentlemen of landed property and farmers, although it has not the appearance of so directly benefiting them as the last regulation with regard to the commerce of grain seems to have.

A TABLE

A TABLE, shewing the rates at which oats or oat-meal might be permitted to be exported from, or imported into Scotland, with the bounty on exportation, or premium on importation, at all different prices.

Oats per boll, Scots measure, or oatmeal, at eight stone per boll, including all oats so far manufactured as to be deprived of their husks, when at				should receive of bounty on exportation,
s.				s. d.
8 or under,	-	-		3 0
9	-	-	-	2 6
10	-	-	-	2 0
11	-	-	-	1 6
12	-	-	-	1 0
13	-	-	-	0 6
14	{ Exportation to cease, and importation be permitted.			
15	A premium to be granted of 0 6 { on importation.			
16 ditto,	-	-		1 0
17 ditto,	-	-		2 0
18 and all above,	-	-		3 0

IN the above table, I have adhered to the Scots boll in preference to any other measure, not only because it is better known in Scotland than any other, but also because of its coincidence with a boll of meal of the legal standard in Scotland; as it is well known that a Scots boll of good oats will in general yield a boll of meal, or very nearly so. This allows for the same bounty to apply for a boll of meal or a boll of oats.

I HAVE likewise supposed it would be equally expedient to grant a bounty on the exportation, and premium on the importation, of oat-meal, as of oats in grain; because, as it can be transported in that state to a distant market about 200 per cent. (including freight and insurance) cheaper than oats, it would be a great saving to the nation to be permitted to transport it in this state, whenever circumstances would admit of it. It would, moreover, tend to promote our own manufactures in some degree, by milling our own oats intended for exportation; and it would farther afford a sort of temptation to the farmer to rear better grain, than he would do were the oats to be exported in substance.

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THE only objection of weight that I can perceive against this plan for regulating the corn-trade, is the difficulty of ascertaining the prices on all occasions, so as to fix the rate of the bounty to be granted, without disputes or ambiguity. And as the British legislature seem as yet to have discovered no proper method for ascertaining the prices of grain with a view to the bounty; and as the law, as it stands at present, with regard to this particular, is liable to very great abuse; I shall endeavour to point out a plan by which these abuses might, in some degree, be obviated for the future.

BEFORE the year 1774, the general court of quarter-sessions in England were empowered to judge of the prices of grain, and to declare when the prices were at such a rate, as by law to admit of importation, or a bounty on exportation. And, in Scotland, the same trust was reposed in the Lords of Council and Session.

BUT as this mode of ascertaining the prices in Scotland was found to be attended with many inconveniencies, by 13th G. III. cap. 43. it was enacted, That, for the future, the sheriff

riff of each maritime county in Scotland, or his substitute, should enquire into, and determine, the common middling prices of British corn and oat-meal; and upon receiving the oaths of two or more persons, fix and ascertain the same by proper acts or determinations, to be subscribed by them respectively; which prices so ascertained should be accounted the legal prices in their respective stewartries or sheriffdoms, for three months; when the prices were to be again ascertained in the same manner.

A VERY little reflection, however, will be sufficient to discover that this plan of ascertaining the prices, is liable to still greater abuses than that which formerly took place; and that the artful corn-merchant, so long as this regulation subsists, may carry on his trade in what manner he pleases, even in direct opposition to the spirit and intention of the law; at least if he is favoured by the sheriff, or his substitute.

FOR, if the prices abroad should at any time be very high, although the prices at home should be such as not to allow of a bounty on exportation, or even not to allow of exportation

tion at all, the corn-merchant, by carrying a small quantity of grain to the market, and selling it at a low rate, has it in his power to produce two or more witnesses, to swear, that they bought grain at such a price in the public market; in consequence of which the sheriff or his substitute may legally fix the price for three months at that port so low as to entitle the exporter to the bounty, although the *real* selling-price at home should be considerably higher.

THE same device might also be practised for getting the ports opened for importing foreign corn, when the real price in the home market was below that at which it may be permitted by law. It is besides liable to other frauds and abuses, which it is unnecessary here to enumerate.

WHETHER it was with a view to obviate these inconveniencies, or to answer some other secret purposes, I shall not now enquire; but in the very next session of parliament, the law, with regard to this particular, was entirely changed; it being ordained, 14th G. III. cap. 64. That, both in England and Scotland, "the prices of corn, and grain, and oat-meal,
"exported

“ exported from this kingdom, shall be regu-
 “ lated and governed by the average prices at
 “ which such corn, and grain, and oat-meal,
 “ shall all be respectively sold in the public
 “ market, at, or nearest to the port or place
 “ from whence such corn, or grain, or oat-
 “ meal, shall be intended to be exported, on
 “ the last market-day preceding the shipping
 “ of such corn or grain, and the respective
 “ bounties granted,—be paid and allowed ac-
 “ cording to such prices.”

BUT if the former law with regard to Scot-
 land was bad, this is still worse; as it is
 equally liable to abuse as the other, and is be-
 sides attended with the peculiar inconvenience
 of leaving the prices continually unfixed, and
 thus proving a perpetual source of uncertainty,
 and endless disputes.

FOR if a merchant shall have provided a
 large quantity of corn for exportation, and
 finds that the real selling-price in the market
 is so high as not to admit of the bounty; by
 exposing a large quantity of grain unexpected-
 ly at the nearest market-town, and selling it at
 a low price, he will immediately occasion the
 price for that market-day to be reduced so
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low as to entitle him to the bounty, in consequence of which he may immediately ship his grain, and claim the bounty before the next market-day. Nor could the bounty in this case, according to our present law, be refused him.

THESE inconveniencies seem to have been so much foreseen in Scotland, that the sheriffs in the several maritime counties have never, that I know of, paid any attention to this amendment, as it is called, of the law, but continue to fix the prices once a-quarter, as if they had still authority by law to do so.

SUCH is the ridiculous state of the law in Scotland at present with regard to this most essential article of commerce.

It seems to me, that these inconveniencies might be best obviated, and the prices of grain ascertained with as great a degree of accuracy as the nature of the thing will admit of, in the following manner.

LET the sheriff of each county on the sea-coast, or his substitute, be authorised and required to summon a jury of six respectable inhabitants,

habitants, consisting of three country-gentlemen, or farmers, or other dealers in grain; and three bakers or brewers, or respectable householders, in town; who should meet with him on the first Monday of each of the months of January, March, May, July, September, and November, each year.—Let this jury, the sheriff or his substitute always being preses, be empowered to examine witnesses upon oath as to the real price of grain, and make use of such other aids as they shall find necessary; and, after due deliberation had, fix and ascertain the real price of grain in that place at the time, by a proper act or determination subscribed by them respectively; which price, being properly notified to the collector of the customs in that district, and duly published to all concerned, shall be accounted the legal price in that district for two months; at which time the prices should, in the same manner, be anew ascertained by another jury.

It is nearly in this manner that the *fiars* are annually ascertained in the several counties of Scotland at present; and it has been found by experience, that it is as little liable to abuse, as any method that can be devised. Whether it would be best for the sheriff to
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summon all the members for the six juries that should meet for this purpose in a year, at the beginning of that year, appointing at that time the particular month that each juror respectively was to attend:—or whether it would be best to nominate and summon the new jury immediately after the last jury had made their decision,—is perhaps of little consequence: but it would be very proper that they should be summoned at least forty or fifty days before the time of meeting, that each of them might have time to attend to the market-prices of grain, and make such enquiries with regard to it, as might enable him to give a proper decision.

By pursuing such a plan steadily for some years, it is not to be doubted, but that Scotland might have the price of grain kept much more steady than it ever has been, and also lower upon an average of years; which would encourage agriculture and manufactures more effectually than any other contrivance that has ever yet been, or perhaps could be adopted.

I HAVE hitherto spoken only of the encouragement that may be given to agriculture, and
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the beneficial consequences that may result to the community, by encouraging the exportation of grain in substance; but as exportation of grain can only take place near the sea-coast, and as the transporting it in that state is always attended with considerable expence and risk, it would on many occasions be much more beneficial to a country to promote the exportation of grain after it is manufactured, than in its rude state.

THE nature of the manufactures that would require to be encouraged with this view, must vary according to the nature of the country. In a nation that possessed a very fertile soil, and enjoyed a serene climate, wheat may be manufactured into starch. In some cases ale, or malt-liquors of other denominations, may be exported as an article of commerce; and on some occasions it may be more convenient to export it in the state of distilled spirits.

THIS last is perhaps the only manufacture of corn that could be carried on with profit in Scotland; and, under proper regulations, might, in all probability, be attended with effects highly beneficial. It is not perhaps beneficial to the country itself to reduce the price
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of corn-spirits too low in Britain, and therefore it may be prudent to continue the revenue-laws at present in force with regard to distillers: but no harm could result to us from reducing the price, as to other nations, as low as possible. If therefore a drawback equal to the whole amount of the excise-duty were allowed upon the exportation of home-made spirits, when grain was selling in the home market at the low prices at which the bounty is just now allowed, our grain, instead of being exported in substance, might find its way into foreign countries at a much less expence in the state of spirits; and if the drawback were discontinued when the price of malt rose to the same rate at which the bounty is discontinued, it would perhaps be attended with still more beneficial effects to the nation, and be less heavy upon the revenue than the bounty on malt at present.

SOMETHING of this kind was attempted during the administration of Mr. Pitt towards the end of the last war, but with that destructive unsteadiness of counsels which so eminently distinguished the administration of this popular leader, in every thing that regarded the
internal

internal prosperity of the state. It was hardly well enacted before it was again repealed; and the idea has never, that I know of, been adopted by any of his successors*.

* Of all the curses that can come upon a nation that is governed by law, nothing can be so destructive as fluctuating counsels in its governors, as these perpetually changing laws sport with the property of individuals in the most shameless manner. In the year 1757, on account of the high price of grain, Mr. Pitt at once passed a law prohibiting distillation entirely, by which many thousands of industrious subjects who carried on this manufacture, were thrown entirely out of employment. But as this was judged expedient for the good of the other subjects of the state, it was complied with without murmuring. In a few years after that, when the price of grain had again fallen to its ordinary rate, distillation was again allowed of, and very great favours were granted to those who should distil for exportation, if the stills were made of an enormous size for that purpose.—When this law had been in force one year, and many persons had procured legal stills at a vast expence; without any regard to the hardships that they must be subjected to, and without any apparent reason for it, this law was instantly repealed, so that their labour went for nothing; and several other laws succeeded, varying from one another in several respects, without any apparent cause; which were successively obtained by the influence of ministerial favourites, to serve their own ends, without regard to the loss that the public thus sustained, or the cruel hardships to which it subjected many industrious subjects of the state.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER FOURTEENTH

VOL. II.

Q

C O N T E N T S.

Farther objections:—"England would oppose the establishing the woollen manufacture in Scotland."—Answers:—Such an opposition would be absurd, as she could not hurt Scotland without hurting herself.—The union has been attended with the most beneficial consequences to England; and these effects will be still increased by cherishing Scotland.—America has been too much encouraged, and Scotland neglected, for some time past. This conduct impolitic.—The trade to Scotland has been more beneficial to England for a century past, than that to America.—Exemplified by a minute examination of the nature of the trade to both places.—This gainful trade from England to Scotland cannot continue, if the last shall become poor; which she must do, if her manufactures are not encouraged.

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OBSERVATION

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NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER FOURTEENTH.

TO MR. LONDON.

DEAR SIR,

I NOW come to consider the last objection you have made to the plan proposed for introducing a fine breed of sheep into the Highlands of Scotland, and establishing a woollen manufacture there, viz. "That the English, ever jealous of any rival in this their favourite manufacture, would take fire at the first mention of such a proposal, and oppose it by every

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device

device they could invent; so that they would probably crush it in its infancy, and make it come at last to nothing, as they formerly did the Scottish plan of effecting a settlement at Darien."

THIS objection has been often urged to me; and I find that many persons in Scotland seriously apprehend there is much opposition to be expected from that quarter. But I, for my own part, am disposed to be of a contrary opinion. I make no doubt indeed but the populace, the giddy mob, headed by their mock *patriotic* leaders, would make a great noise about an affair of this kind, and sound an alarm, as if *Magna Charta* itself, and all their valuable privileges, were to be sold to the Scots for a mess of pottage. But is it to be imagined, that any sober man who thinks seriously upon the subject, could be in good earnest alarmed at such a proposal?—As justly might the inhabitants of Surry have complained, that the nation would have been undone by establishing the woollen manufacture in Yorkshire, as that the British dominions would be hurt by disseminating the blessings of industry and plenty through every corner of the realm.

SCOTLAND

SCOTLAND is now a part of the British dominion as much as Northumberland or Wales, and as such ought to contribute her proportion towards the public burdens of the state, and constitute a material part of the strength and importance of the realm. But where is the minister, where the man of common understanding, who does not see, that if it is in flourishing and affluent circumstances,—if its territories abound with a number of active and industrious people, it will be able to contribute more abundantly to the wants of the state, and constitute a much more essential part of its real strength and vigour, than if its few inhabitants be poor, miserable, and inactive, as at present?

It would therefore be the height of folly in them to oppose such a proposal: for if she is rich, her riches must always flow into England; and if she is powerful, that power must contribute towards the preservation of the state.—But were it otherwise,—is she not a free state, united by a fair and equal contract with another state, equally free with herself?—Under what pretext, therefore, could her industry be checked, or her manufactures discouraged? I can
see

see none, unless it were to promote the views of those desperate spirits who hope to reap benefit from public dissensions, and advance their own fortunes on the ruin of the state.

THE genius of the English nation does not perhaps appear to such disadvantage in any other point of view, as in that easy credulity, with which the populace, and some who move in a more exalted sphere, allow themselves to become the dupes of artful and designing men. Open and candid themselves, they are not apt to suspect that others are cunning and malicious; and thus they often unwittingly become their tools, and serve to promote plans that have a natural tendency to their own destruction.—No nation ever had greater reason to feel through every corner of the realm, the many and great blessings they have enjoyed in consequence of the union with Scotland. To England these blessings have already been manifest and unequivocal; although Scotland has not yet reaped all those benefits she may have hoped to enjoy in consequence of this union. It is, therefore, in an especial manner the interest of England, and it ought to be the mutual desire of all the inhabitants of both countries, to bury in perpe-

petual friendship the memory of all past dissensions.

tual oblivion the recollection of those deadly feuds that so often proved the destruction of their forefathers, and to forget every circumstance that could tend to point out any distinction among them.

WHAT a dreadful state of civil discord would Britain now experience, if all the kingdoms of the heptarchy were at present considered as distinct states, as having each of them separate interests that were unconnected with that of the whole state! or if those acts of hostilities, by which these different people long ago offended one another, should be faithfully commemorated, and an idea continually inculcated of the necessity of retaliation; and a mutual desire to retard the happiness, and prevent the prosperity of each, should universally prevail! Happily for Britain the union of those nations was effected under the influence of wiser princes, and all these idle distinctions were quickly done away. Nor do I know an instance of any nation that followed an opposite conduct, unless it was that of Spain with regard to Portugal; who, when she got possession of that crown, was not content to enjoy this blessing with thankfulness, but, by a folly of conduct that

must

must ever reflect disgrace upon her counsels, remembering their former animosities, she ceased not to harass them with repeated acts of cruelty and oppression, till she forced them to call the Duke of Braganza to the throne, and to sever again that kingdom from her dominions; which, by a wiser conduct, might have continued under it till this day, and would have rendered Spain the most powerful state in Europe.

LET Britain imitate her wiser forefathers; and, by destroying all marks that tend to distinguish the several nations into which this island was once divided, strive to raise it into one great and consistent whole, whose general welfare must depend on the prosperity of all its parts. Then shall she rise, to be distinguished among the nations, not less by her internal felicity, than by her external trade and naval power, which shall long carry the British flag triumphant round the world, and make her be revered among all people and languages.

AMERICA has of late become the great object of adulation of the English nation. Britain has fought her battles for her, and protected her

her from the encroachments of an active and insidious foe, at a vast expence of blood and treasure, in the hope of securing to herself a gainful trade with that extensive continent, which it is doubtful after all if she will be able to obtain, while Scotland has been neglected and despised, as of no importance to the state.

It is but two years since an application was made to parliament for a small encouragement to her linen manufacture, which, to please the English, she has exerted herself to improve as much as possible for near half a century past.—But she was told, that a manufacture which needed to be bolstered up, and could not walk without crutches, was not worth the preserving, and her petition refused.—If then her linen manufacture must be laid aside, to what hand shall she turn herself but to the woollen?—Happy had it been for her if she had done so at the beginning; and not less advantageous for England upon the whole, as she would thus in all probability have still continued her exchange of woollen goods for the linens of Germany, which is now in a great measure lost, by the woollen manufactures

manufactures being established there when their linen-trade began to decline.

BUT although it be allowed, that the trade to America is of vast importance to Britain, and therefore deserves to be attended to as an object of primary importance, it is highly probable, that the trade to Scotland has been for half a century past of greater value to England, and has served to employ more of her people, than the American trade has done;—and therefore deserves to have at least an equal share of her attention, and as high a degree of encouragement.

THIS, you will say, is an astonishing assertion. To convince you, however, that it is not thrown out at random,—please to attend to the following facts.

IT is usually computed, that there are not less than two millions of inhabitants in Scotland;—and it appears, that at the highest computation that has yet been made, that of Mr. Burke in the House of Commons, the British subjects in North America only amount to about one million eight hundred thousand.—At the beginning of the last war, the best calculation

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calculation that could be made, did not make them to amount at the highest to one million; so that I conclude the last account is probably overcharged. But not to dwell on these *minutiae*, it will be readily allowed, that the number of British subjects in America since the union, could not, at a medium of all the years, be near one million;—so that the inhabitants of Scotland have been, during all that period, more than double of that of the Americans.

If then Scotland has contained double the number of inhabitants that America has contained of British subjects in that period, it will follow, that she has consumed more of the manufactures of England than America has done, if it shall appear that each person in general daily uses as great a proportion of these manufactures in the one country as in the other. This will best appear by taking a general view of the English manufactures consumed by each.

SCOTLAND takes from England,
Cloths broad and narrow, — with which all
but the lower ranks of people are constantly
cloathed,

cloathed, — duffles, — freezes, — blankets, — flannels, — serges, — pirqets, &c. to a great amount :

WORSTEDS, — camblets, — crapes, — poplins, — dorfeteens, — brilliants, — mankies, — shalloons, — durants, — temmies, &c. worn by every woman, and all from England :

HATS, fine and coarse, — entirely from England, till of late that some of the coarser sorts have begun to be manufactured here :

SILKS, — velvets, — velverets, &c. to a great amount, none of which have hitherto been manufactured in Scotland :

SILK gauzes, — laces, — ribbons, — hose, — gloves, and other haberdashery wares, whose names I know not, to a very great amount :

MUSLINS plain and striped, — Indian chints, — painted callicoes, — handkerchiefs, — Manchester cottons, — fustians, &c.

SEWING worsteds, — ditto Silks, — Grogram hair, — buttons, — tapes, — thread-lace, &c.

CUTLERY

CUTLERY wares of all sorts,—buckles,—jewels,—toys and trinkets from Sheffield and Birmingham, &c. to an exceeding great amount:

NEEDLES,—pins,—wire, — and manufactures of wire of every sort:

PORCELAIN,—white and cream-coloured stone, — crystal glasses,—window-glasses,—mirrors, &c.

TIN plates,—plate iron,—copper and brass:

TEA,—coffee,—sugars,—rum,—rice, sago, &c. which, although not immediately the produce of England, are all purchased with English commodities:

HOPS,—madder, liquorice,—saffron,—dyeing-stuffs, and drugs:

ALE of different sorts,—but especially porter, to a most shameful amount:

BESIDES near one fourth part of the rents of Scotland, computed to be usually spent in England: which article alone, at the most moderate estimation, may be computed at a medium

medium to amount to between four and five hundred thousand pounds Sterling.

IN return,—England takes from Scotland,

A SMALL quantity of linen,—and some linen threads; all of which are manufactured of foreign materials:

FRESH and pickled salmon,—for the London market only:

A VERY small quantity of herrings:

A FEW dozens of worsted hose from Aberdeen:

HIGHLAND cattle,—the only article of value in the export from Scotland to England:

BESIDES the money that is spent by English youth at the several universities of Scotland.

I HAVE not pretended to estimate the amount of these several articles, as any thing I could offer on that head would be purely conjectural——But I imagine that either the first or the last article in the English list would alone

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alone balance all the articles from Scotland, or nearly so.

ANY one who glances over this account, and observes what a vast proportion of the inhabitants of Scotland are constantly clothed almost entirely with one kind or other of these goods, and considers how much of the other articles are daily consumed in every family, will readily allow, that an equal number of the inhabitants of North America, who hardly take any other articles from England but cloathing and hardwares, cannot consume more of English manufactures than an equal number of the Scots do; especially when he adverts, that in the populous province of New England, they have for more than thirty years past manufactured as many coarse cloths and hats*, as
serve

* In a letter addressed to the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, concerning the trade to New England, printed anno 1715, we find the following observations. "We have a very considerable manufactory already established in New England, begun in the great scarcity and dearth of goods about nine years ago, &c.—This put them upon making buttons, stuffs, kerseys, linsey-woolseys, flannels, &c. which has decreased the importation of those provinces above 50,000*l.* per annum." Thus it appears, that the manufactures of New England were

serve themselves, and several of the neighbouring provinces.

FROM

were begun as early as the Union, and have gone on encreasing ever since.

The Lords Commissioners of Trade, in consequence of an order of the House of Commons, dated December 25, 1725, give the following account of the manufactures of the British colonies. " That in the colonies of *New England*,—*New York*,—*Connecticut*,—*Rhode island*,—*Pennsylvania*,—and in the county of *Somerset* in *Maryland*, " the people had fallen into the manufacture of woollen " and linen cloth for the use of their own families, &c.

" The reason why these people had begun this manufacture were,—That the product of those colonies being " chiefly stock and grain, the estates of the inhabitants " depended wholly upon farming; and as this could not " be carried on without a certain quantity of *sheep*, their " wool would be utterly lost, were not their servants employed at leisure-times of the year, but chiefly during " the winter, in manufacturing it for the use of their families, &c.

" There are more trades carried on, and manufactures " set up, in the provinces of the continent of *America*, to " to the northward of *Virginia*, prejudicial to the trade and " manufactures of *Great Britain*, particularly in *New England*, than in any other of the British colonies; which is " not to be wondered at; for their soil, climate, and produce, being pretty near the same with ours, they have " no staple commodities of their own to exchange for our " manufactures, which puts them under the greater necessity, as well as greater temptation, of providing " themselves at home. To which may be added, in the " charter-governments, the little dependence they have upon " their mother-country, and consequently the small restraints

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From these premises I conclude, that the trade to Scotland has been more beneficial to England since the union, than that to America has been*.

"they are under in any matters detrimental to her interest."

Since that time these manufactures have been greatly improved, and other new ones established greatly to the prejudice of Great Britain;—particularly that of hats,—the materials for which they have at so easy a rate as to enable them to be manufactured 40 or 50 per cent. cheaper than they could be afforded at if brought from Britain;—and various manufactures of hardwares have been also established there.—Nor will it be possible to prevent these from encroaching, in whatever way the present contest may be ended.—So that it is high time for *Britain* to look to her own interest,—to strive to promote her own trade and manufactures at home as much as possible,—to endeavour to augment the number of her subjects at *home* to the utmost of her power, and not to pamper too much this haughty and froward child, who will never be led but with reluctance, and will one day prove the ruin of this state, if she does not in time provide for that separation that must sooner or later inevitably happen.

* The tobacco-trade, I am sensible, brings in a great revenue to government; and, by being re-exported, serves to enrich the merchants, and bring money from other nations into the state: so that it will be viewed by *ministers* and *merchants* as an inestimable branch of commerce. It is evident, however, that this trade tends but very little to promote the manufactures, or encourage the general industry, of this nation; so that it is much less beneficial to the state, than many other branches of trade, which afford far less considerable annual returns.

IN consequence, however, of this daily losing traffic, Scotland is prevented from being so highly benefited by the other advantages she possesses, as might have been naturally expected. Her trade from Glasgow, and a few other places, to foreign parts,—and the return of a few of her numerous emigrants who have made fortunes in distant realms, have hitherto enabled her in some measure to preserve a sort of miserable existence in spite of these prodigious drains from her.—But, notwithstanding this, and the other shifts she has been forced to adopt, to help to stave off the evil day a little longer;—yet this universal consumption, if suffered to prey upon her vitals, must ere long prove fatal, unless some effectual remedy is applied: A remedy that is calculated to inspire life and vigour into all orders of people; and not like those that have been hitherto attempted, that tend only to enrich a few at the expence of the many, and thus virtually to encrease instead of removing the disease.

IN consequence of this fatal policy, the country begins to be deserted; and, if it is persisted in, it must in a short time become little better than a desert waste:—and it deserves the serious attention of every inhabitant of England,

to

to consider, whether it would be most for her interest, to have these inhabitants at her side, where they must continue to promote her manufactures, and add to her native internal vigour;—or on the other side of the Atlantic, where there is less security for their continuing faithful to the parent state;—and where, it is possible, they may ere long help them to throw off that allegiance to Britain which they seem to wear at present with so much reluctance.

It has been shown in the course of these letters, I hope, in a satisfactory manner, that a great part of Scotland has no other means left for bringing in money to herself, and consequently for enabling her to continue a customer to England, nearly so efficacious, as the plan recommended for promoting the growth of wool, and the woollen manufacture, in Scotland;—and that therefore it is the interest of England as much as of Scotland, that that plan should be adopted.

It is not indeed to be doubted, that it would be more for the interest of England, if Scotland could continue to take all her manufactures from England, without having any ma-

manufactures of her own.—But as it is impossible for a spring to continue to flow constantly, unless it be continually fed with abundant moisture; so it is equally impossible for one nation to continue to purchase the manufactures of another, unless it has some way of bringing money from other countries to pay for these manufactures. So long as Scotland has money, from the nature of things she must continue a constant customer to England for many of her manufactures, articles of luxury and superfluities, and must add to the glory, the strength, and security of the British empire: but if she be poor, she cannot be of almost any use in any of these respects: on the contrary, her nobles and other men of family without fortune, must become the dependents and tools of the court, and suck out the vitals, and in time tend to enslave that nation which it would otherwise be their interest and their glory to protect.

On these accounts I cannot imagine that any clear-sighted minister would dare to oppose the improvement of her manufactures,—or that a nation so justly jealous of preserving her valuable liberties to the latest posterity as England is, would concur with him in a step that would
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have such a natural tendency to sap the foundations of these liberties, should a minister be so daringly unjust as to avow such an intention. So long as the lower ranks of people are rich and independent in every corner of the state, its liberties rest upon the firmest basis that human wisdom can invent; but when they become indigent, and of course spiritless, and dependent, the liberties of that state are but on a tottering foundation. Ye patriots, therefore,—ye genuine and unaffected patriots, who wish to hand down to the latest posterity those unequalled blessings that you now enjoy, watch with an eagle eye over every province of the realm;—Protect the poor;—Raise them from their low estate;—Let them feel what it is to *possess*, and they will know how to *defend*—These are your friends, these your only allies upon whom you may at all times firmly rely. Cherish them as the apple of thine eye; and be assured, that when you do so, you are not fostering an insidious rival, but a brother, who will be ready to share in all your dangers;—who will add to your strength, and by mutual offices of friendly kindness, promote your happiness, security, and peace.

You cannot but have already remarked, that as England has already lost a great part of her
trade

trade for fine cloths to many parts of the world, in consequence of having lost her fine wool, and runs a great risk of losing that share of it which still remains; if she continues to depend on Spain for that necessary article, it becomes necessary to look around her to try if she can obtain it elsewhere at a more moderate rate.—From the present political situation of England, there is but little hope that ever she could regain such a pre-eminence in rearing fine wool as she once enjoyed. But every thing concurs at present to favour the attempt in Scotland; and should it succeed, there is no doubt but that Britain might again recover that pre-eminence in the woollen manufacture she once possessed.—For as there is no other kingdom in Europe, except Spain, that could produce such fine wool as might be reared in Scotland, the manufacturers of other nations would be under the necessity of resorting to Spain, or more distant countries, for that necessary article, which we could have within our own island; which would give us such an advantage over them in this respect as would ensure the prosperity of this branch of our manufacture.—In this view, therefore, it is greatly the interest of the state to promote the plan for improving our wool above recommended.

HAVING

HAVING thus endeavoured to obviate all the objections you have made to the proposed plan for improving the wool in this country, I am willing to believe that you will rest satisfied in the opinion that it may with safety be attempted; and that the attempt will probably be attended with success, and prove in the end highly beneficial to the nation in general, and to this corner of it in particular.

You say you are convinced, that if this great point could be fully effected, there would be no difficulty in establishing the woollen manufacture in Scotland upon a firm and lasting basis.—But in that event you ask, “What would become of the linen manufacture? would I wish that it should be given up entirely throughout all the kingdom, and the woollen manufacture be established every where in its stead?”—By no means.—Such rash counsels are always attended with danger.—Wisdom acts with caution in all cases;—and experience tells us, that great and sudden changes in the manufactures of any nation are usually attended with very calamitous consequences to numbers of industrious labourers, whose families are ruined, and their hopes entirely blasted, by such unwise counsels. Far, therefore, be such an idea from entering into my imagination.

ALTHOUGH

ALTHOUGH I do not think it will admit of a doubt, that the woollen manufacture is, upon the whole, much better adapted to the state of this country, and the nature of our climate *, than the linen, and may therefore be carried on in most places of it with greater profit;—yet there are some particular places where the people have now acquired such an adroitness in the linen manufacture, as could not be attained but by long practice; and where the soil is so favourable for rearing flax, as gives much room to hope that this manufacture might be carried on there with success, were a due attention bestowed upon the encouraging of it there. Hitherto the trustees for the improvement of manufactures, &c. in Scotland, by grasping at too

* It has been demonstrated, that the climate of Britain, in consequence of her insular situation, and the peculiarities that result from thence, is calculated for rearing better wool than can be produced in a continental climate. But the case is directly the reverse with regard to the rearing or manufacturing flax: the steadiness of season peculiar to continental countries, being much better calculated for all the operations on flax, than that variableness of weather that necessarily results from our insular situation, which puts it out of our power to obtain, to a critical accuracy, the precise degree of perfection, either for pulling, watering, or grasing our flax; so that it is impossible either to rear the flax so cheap, or to be certain of having the filament so equally strong and firm, as may with ease be obtained on the continent.

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much, have been able to accomplish little.—
 They have endeavoured to establish the linen
 manufacture in every corner at once; and by
 thus attempting to divide their favours equally
 to all, they have not been able effectually to
 serve any. But if this should confine their views
 to a few of the places that are most favoura-
 bly situated for carrying on that manufacture,
 and should continue to support them by a warm
 and uninterrupted exertion, till things were
 put upon a right footing, and the manufacture
 set fairly agoing, there is no reason to fear but
 the linen manufacture might come at length to
 flourish in these places abundantly. Two or
 three years ago I wrote some letters on this sub-
 ject, which were published in the Weekly Ma-
 gazine also, under the signature of *Agricola*, (a
 copy of which I have obtained for you, and
 send along with this), to which I must refer
 you for farther satisfaction on this head, if you
 are desirous of it;—for I am already sufficiently
 tired with this subject.—I am &c.

OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER FIFTEENTH

C O N T E N T S.

Introduction.—A retrospective view of the causes which have prevented the progress of manufactures and useful arts in Scotland.—Unhappy consequences that have resulted from thence.—Greater ills that may be dreaded.—Arguments to induce men of influence to ward off the threatened calamities.—The prosperity of those in high rank depends upon the riches of those in lower station.—Illustrated by various arguments ;—by the example of Spain.—Striking contrast between the ancient and present state of that kingdom.—What are the steps necessary to be taken for effectually exciting a spirit of industry among the lower ranks of people.—Necessity of doing this before any effectual improvement can take place.—Folly and injustice of complaining of the indolence and other bad qualities of the poor ;—it reflects disgrace upon the complainers.—The efforts of gentlemen in Scotland for improving the country, have been hitherto in general improperly directed ;—and therefore unsuccessful.—Compulsatory statutes, however seemingly favourable to arts and manufactures, usually do harm ;—and why.—In what manner men of high rank may most effectually co-operate in forwarding useful arts and manufactures.—Objection to the plan proposed for breeding numerous flocks of sheep in Scotland.—Want of a proper market.—Answer.—England would become a much better and more certain market for sheep, than for cattle, from Scotland ;—and why.—Sheep a much less hazardous stock than cattle ;—and how.—The gentlemen of Scotland ought to endeavour to get liberty to export wool from that country.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER FIFTEENTH

TO MR. LONDON.

December 10. 1775.

I THANK you, kind Sir, for the very liberal encomiums you have bestowed upon your humble servant.—Justice is painted blind.—Surely Friendship ought to be represented in the same manner; for I know nothing that has such a tendency to mislead the understanding as this tender connection.

I thank

I thank you for this fresh proof of your kind partiality.

You think the arguments already produced, prove, in a satisfactory manner, that Scotland is peculiarly well calculated for the woollen manufacture; and that it is so plainly the interest of every man of property in Scotland to enter warmly into the scheme proposed for encouraging it, that nothing more is necessary to cause it to be adopted than to make it generally known.—As to the last part, at least, my hopes are far from being so sanguine as yours.—No stranger to the world, I am far from thinking, that reason alone is sufficient in most cases to sway mankind.—But waiving this subject at present, I am now to inform you, that however strong the former arguments for inducing the gentlemen of Scotland to look around, and exert themselves in time, may seem to you, there are others, of a more touching nature, that might be adduced with a view to rouse them from their drowsy lethargy, should any one think it worth his while to attempt to do that. To amuse you with a little variety, I shall attempt to throw together some of these arguments into the form of an address to the nobility and gentlemen of landed

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ed property in Scotland ;—which might run in the following strain, supposing they had been previously acquainted with the foregoing letters.

“THE many benefits that would accrue to Scotland from an encrease of the number of sheep, and a due encouragement of the growth of fine wool here, have been already so clearly pointed out, and the uncommon advantages that this nation possesses above all others for carrying on the woollen manufacture with profit, hath been so fully demonstrated, that I hope few other arguments need be here produced to induce you all heartily to unite, and by one well-directed effort ensure to your country the many advantages that you would thus procure for it, and transmit to your posterity that rich independence which must be its necessary attendant.

“SCOTLAND, long divided by internal factions, or struggling in an unequal contest with a much more powerful state for liberty and independence, was prevented from attending sufficiently to the progress of arts and manufactures, and from bestowing upon them those necessary encouragements that were adapted to

to inspire them with vigour, and make them keep pace with the improvements of their surrounding neighbours. At length, however, when she began to see the vast importance of these long-neglected arts, the seat of empire having been transferred to England, she became in some measure only a province of that more powerful state: her nobles were carried from their native seats; and her great men, allured by the prospect of plenty, that must ever centre at the seat of empire, in a great measure deserted their native country, and thus effectually deprived it of the best means for recovering itself, and of enabling it to make a distinguished figure in the circle of commerce, of arts and manufactures.

“AND, as if Heaven in its wrath, not satisfied with these severe chastisements, had decreed her to drink still more deeply of the bitter cup of sorrow;—when that race of princes whom she considered as in a peculiar manner her own native sovereigns, was forced to abandon a throne which they were judged unqualified properly to fill, many of her principal men having unfortunately sided with these princes, became sharers of their misfortunes; so that the infant manufactures, which were then supported

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ported by the money or influence of these chiefs, being deprived of that resource, were involved in the same general ruin with their patrons and supporters *. From these causes, while other nations were advancing in arts and industry, Scotland remained inactive, so as to be soon involved in that state of poverty which has so long prevented her from taking any vigorous step for regaining that influence and weight in the general scale of things that Nature has evidently intended for her.

"SELDOM, it is said, does one misfortune come unattended by others; and never was the observation more exactly fulfilled than in the present case: for, in consequence of the general poverty of the country, and the necessary want of those agreeable conveniencies that other richer countries enjoy, it became so disagreeable to men who have got a taste of the elegant conveniencies of life, to reside in these melancholy provinces, where want and gloomy dejection do in general prevail, that they are forced, perhaps without intending it,

* This was in a particular manner the case with a manufacture of broad cloth that had been established at *New Mills* before the Revolution, which then was ruined entirely.

to desert their native seats almost for ever; and the dismal scenes that these afford, are so very ill adapted to the lively hopes of youthful fancy, that the children of the few that remain behind, sicken at the dreary prospect, and sigh for busier scenes in countries more remote. It is from this cause that our illustrious youth have no sooner obtained a competent education, than they fly to distant regions, and exhaust far from home that spirit and youthful vigour which ought to have enriched their native country.—Wo unto thee, O my country, for thou art fallen under the load of the most grievous of all curses; for *the little that thou hast, is taken away from thee*; and the portion which ought to have been thine, is given to another more rich and more powerful than thyself.

“LONG hath this severest of all calamities that can befall a nation been suffered to pass unobserved. Where is the man who can say, that some of his dearest connections are not now far from the place where they could minister most effectually to his delight? Is there a mother who shall read this, or a father, who is not divested of paternal tenderness, whose tears will not bear witness to this melancholy truth,

truth, that their dearest hopes lie buried in distant plains, or that strangers alone enjoy those tender assiduities that they had a right to expect in their old age from the filial care of their own progeny? — Yet, where is the man who hath boldly advanced, and with the spirit of a father, of a friend to the widow, and of those that are in sore distress, hath stretched out his hand, and, like a guardian angel, endeavoured to ward off those grievous ills that threaten his descendents? Dejected and spiritless, all stand aloof, as if afraid to venture to begin the arduous undertaking. — But, of what are you afraid? Phantoms and Chimeras may affright, but nothing real can oppose their steps. — Now is the favourable time for commencing this glorious undertaking; — and there are some just now who are able, and seem to be willing to atchieve it. — Go on, then, with assured certainty of success. — Probe the wound to the bottom: It admits not of a partial cure. — Go deep, — and deeper still; be not afraid. It is but a filthy ulcer that hath not yet affected the vital parts. — Half the trouble that has been bestowed in applying palliatives, would long ere now, by a manly boldness, have effected a radical cure.

“HAPPILY the symptoms have of late become so alarming, as to rouse the attention of every one, so as to make them watch the progress of this growing malady. While it only carried off our youth, and destroyed the fondest hopes of their parents, we remained unmoved in a sort of melancholy stupor.—While our people were only dropping off one by one from every corner of the country, we seemed still insensible of the daily waste we thus sustained.—But when at last the old and infirm, the mother, with the helpless babe that hangs upon her breast, forgetting former friendships and connections, leave their native soil, and seek for refuge on another shore, we are roused from our lethargy, and are, I hope, preparing to free ourselves from the influence of that malady which has so long oppressed us. Happy will it be for Scotland, if, when these violent symptoms shall abate, the memory of them be not also forgotten, and we return to our former state of indifference with regard to that fatal disorder, which, although it may be accidentally allayed at times, will still continue alive, unless some effectual cure is undertaken, and will in time burst forth with other and more alarming symptoms.

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“THERE is no axiom in geometry more indisputable, than that the power, the influence, the very existence of men of landed property, depends upon the well-being, the riches, the activity of those in the lower spheres of life. A man who is poor, can never pay a rent : a man who is dependent upon the will of another for his subsistence, can never be actuated by that energetic spirit which alone can stimulate to arduous undertakings.—If, therefore, you hope to thrive yourselves, strive to make your inferiors rich ; and if you hope to make them rich, first make them independent. These, O ye nobles, and great men of the earth, are the only means of ensuring lasting felicity to yourselves, and riches and independence to your families.—Let this, therefore, be the object for which you strive ; nor rest satisfied till you have finally attained it.—Your all——your independence is at stake ; and ye —— who know the difference that is betwixt the nerveless abasement of that dependent thing which crawls upon the dust, and licks the courtier’s feet, and the celestial energy of that mind, which, animated with a consciousness of independence, looks down on “ low ambition,
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and the pride of kings *," can best compute the value of this blessing.——If, then, ye find your own minds warmed with that animating fire; if ye perceive, that by this means one man is more highly elevated above another, than that debased thing excels the beasts that graze the fields; does not your heart glow with rapt'rous gratitude to Heaven for having put it in thy power thus as it were to form a second intellectual creation! which hath thus enabled thee to blow into the torpid mind the vivifying breath, and to foster it with friendly care, till it gathers accumulated strength, and then bursts forth in great and daring actions like thine own?—Such are the natural sentiments of the noble mind.——But the selfish reptile, afraid lest others should excel itself, feels more delight in receiving that humiliating homage from its inferiors, which itself must give to others, than in any action of beneficence.——Never can the little mind forgive the superior virtues of one in lower rank,——Dependent itself, it wishes to abase all others to the same estate; and all its little plans can only tend to make itself still more contemptible, and its country more feeble and enervated.

* Pope.

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“ To such I wish not at all to speak; — their number is, I hope, but few. — To those of more enlarged mind and elevated sentiments, I must again repeat it, that the first step towards improvement, is to render all beneath them as easy in their circumstances, and as independent in mind, as possible. All essential improvements must ever be carried on by the lower ranks of people; — but a dependent mind will never attempt to make any improvement, nor be brought to adopt one however plainly it may be pointed out. — Let your attention, therefore, be turned chiefly towards those in the lowest ranks in society; — free them not only from dependence on yourself, but protect them also from the rod of others. — Cherish them in thy bosom with lenient tenderness, — they will soon abundantly requite you for all your pains. Instead of that stupid torpor that now renders them insensible even of kindness, their minds will be taught to glow with the warmest effusions of grateful esteem, (for gratitude is only to be met with in cultivated minds). Instead of that listless apathy, arising from a total suppression of hope and desire, which makes them at present alike neglectful of good offices, and regardless of the bad; — their minds, enlivened
by

by hope and tender, desires will become feelingly alive and active, so as to be sensible of those delicate *stimuli* that actuate the cultivated mind, and from the influence of which alone proceed those glorious actions that so conspicuously elevate man above all the other creatures of God.

SHAKESPEARE, with that energetic propriety so eminently peculiar to himself, represents the great Lord Talbot as calling *himself* only the shadow of that mighty Talbot who made France tremble through all her regions, and pointing to his soldiers say,

These are his substance, sinews, arms and strength,

With which he yoketh your rebellious necks;
Raseth your cities, and subverts your towns,
And in a moment makes them desolate.

BUT if a general, without his army, may, with any degree of justice, be called a shadow without a substance, with still greater propriety may the inferior orders of the people upon the estate of a gentleman of landed property be called his *substance, sinews, arms, and strength*; for without these he becomes a mere ideal phantom,

tom,—a name without a substance.—His large possessions, and high-sounding titles, would in that case, only serve to hold him up a little above the croud, to make him a more conspicuous object of derision and of public scorn.—Without money,—without influence, he becomes the abject tool of those who feed and clothe him: and, instead of defending the state by the vigour of his arm, or aiding it by the wisdom of his counsels, he sucks out the blood of the industrious poor, and thus drains his country of her vital energy and strength: nor has he any other object in view in the counsel he gives, but to devise new methods how he may gorge his ravenous maw, which, with insatiable appetite, is constantly crying, *Give, give*, so long as one poor drop remains to support his insignificant existence.

“Is there a man so totally lost to all sense of dignity as to be able to look upon this picture without feeling his mind glow with a mixture of pity and contempt for such an object.—Yet such must become the state of the descendants of every man of landed property in Scotland at no very distant period, unless you quickly exert yourselves to raise the poor and drooping objects who now drawl out a sort of vegetable

vegetable existence on many of your estates — While yet a small spark of vital warmth remains among them, make haste to cherish it. — By your well-directed care and timely attention; it may soon be made to glow with the most active energy. But if it shall be suffered to die away entirely, in vain shall your posterity attempt to revive it. They will even lose the desire themselves of attempting to do it. Beyond a certain point of abasement nations lose the power of recovering themselves. — From bad they continually descend to worse, till they at last are swallowed up by some more vigorous state, and suffer, not a reformation, but a total renovation.

“ We need not go to distant nations in search of an example of these important truths; nor need we ascend to the fabulous æra of antiquity for facts to illustrate these assertions. Spain is at this moment little better than the ghost of a mighty empire, reduced to the very borders of perdition by this emaciating disease. Her life is not yet entirely gone; but that existence is only known by those feeble emotions that denote her speedy departure. — Exhausted to a shadow, the little meagre blood she has left, scarce creeps along her veins; and she is so entirely

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tirely covered by those leeches, (a nobility and gentry divested of landed revenue), who have been suffered to seize upon her, that there is no room left to administer a remedy for her. It is these vermin alone that are alive and active, who greedily seize to themselves every drop of blood as it is slowly generated, so as effectually to prevent it from contributing towards the encrease of her real strength and vigour.

“ ABOUT two hundred years ago, Spain contained a numerous and active peasantry, who, by their vigorous industry, lived happy in the enjoyment of their own property; and, being themselves in affluence, supported by their labour, with becoming dignity, a reputable body of independent nobility and gentry, whose many brilliant actions at that time afford the most striking contrast to their present abasement. But by a fortuitous concurrence of unlucky circumstances, the national industry received a check; which having been disregarded at the time as insignificant on account of the dazzling objects that then attracted the attention of all ranks of persons in that country, the *people* * gradually

* The word *people* admits of two meanings in modern languages, which occasions a sort of ambiguity. Sometimes

gradually became poor, and were not able to afford the wonted returns to their superiors.—The nobles and gentry became of course more straitened in their circumstances than formerly, and by consequence more avaricious. The *poor*, instead of being seasonably relieved and supported, were more and more oppressed, till those who had any remains of spirit were forced to emigrate to other regions; and the few that remained, sunk at last into their present state of abject debility.—The grandees thus finding it impossible to draw a sufficient revenue from their estates, flocked to court, in hopes of obtaining those posts, or pensions, or lucrative monopolies, which the misguided court (a court necessarily misguided by the counsel of those who hoped to share in the spoils of their country) distributed with the most destructive liberality.

“ It is from this inattention to the *people*, and the pitiful system of selfish policy that has been adopted in consequence of it, that that mighty nation, which sent her victorious arms

times it denotes the whole community, and is equivalent to the Latin *populus*; sometimes only the lower ranks, *plebs*. It is in the last sense it is here used; and in general this is the meaning of it when printed in Italics.

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around the globe,—whose princes, intoxicated with power, and continued success, formed the ridiculous plan of universal monarchy, and made all the nations of Europe tremble for their tottering freedom,—is now dwindled into such total insignificance, as to be hardly in a condition to defend her own dominions against the poorest nation of Europe; and even with difficulty bears up against the African corsairs.—It is in consequence of this destructive policy, that we have lately seen the monarch of this once universally triumphant nation, obliged to descend to the humiliating meanness of disavowing his own orders, to avoid the dreaded indignation of the King of Britain*.—It is in consequence of this pitiful policy, that her nobles, instead of being actuated by that generous delirium which led to the most intrepid and disinterested actions, are now become the abject tools and humble sycophants of court, the legal robbers of the state, and the most merciless oppressors of the poor.—And it is owing to the same system of short-sighted policy, that her gentry, formerly rich in the abundant revenue they enjoyed, and active in their several

* This refers to the affair of Falkland's island.

stations, are dwindled into the miserable *pantalon*, the mere ghost of departed dignity, which in listless inactivity dreams away its time in a solitary aping of mock royalty, and subsists upon the unsubstantial revenue of abundant rent-rolls long ago annihilated, which once were drawn from those now uncultivated fields over which he claims the undisputed superiority.

“ Look upon this picture, all ye surrounding nations, and learn from her sad example to know upon what your own true felicity depends.

“ *Discite justitiam, moniti, et non temnere plebes.*

These lower orders of the people are the bees that collect the honey upon which the whole hive must be subsisted. If they are numerous, strong, and active; and if they have proper materials within their reach on which that activity may be exerted, abundance will be felt in every corner, and all ranks of citizens will be enabled to move in their several spheres with dignity and decorum.

“ UNFORTUNATELY the interests of these meaner classes of the people have been too
little

little regarded in some parts of Scotland by our forefathers, which has sunk them to a degree of abasement far beneath the rank they ought to hold in a well-ordered state; which instead of being viewed as their misfortune, has been too often imputed to them as a crime, and has drawn down upon them much contumely and unmerited abuse.

“To the man whose mind is liberally enlarged, these objects excite sensations of a very different sort. He knows, that although man is an animal naturally endowed with powerful *capabilities* to adopt the word of a celebrated modern philologist, yet these may lie for ever dormant, unless he is placed on a stage proper for calling them forth to action; and it is by gradual steps, and slow, that he attains the power of exerting his mental faculties with *intense* vigour in any particular line. It was by a gradual ascent from the first self-evident axioms of geometry, and by the help of a series of propositions, at first simple, and adapted to an ordinary capacity, that the immortal Newton himself attained that pre-eminence in mathematical knowledge for which he is so justly admired. And it is by similar, though less gigantic strides, that every mind which is be-
spired

mired in ignorance, must be initiated in knowledge, and gradually trained to vigour and energy.—If, therefore, we wish to avail ourselves of the generous faculties of the mind, we ought, first, to take care that these faculties be awakened.—To look for their fullest exertions without doing this, is nearly as ridiculous, as to expect that a blind man should distinguish colours, or a deaf man be transported with the tones of harmony.

“WHEN a man can claim nothing as his property; so long as he is subjected to the power of another, who useth him as he thinks proper, that man enjoys only a mere animal existence. Humble and dependent, like his brother-spaniel he licks the hand that strikes him. Without hope, he has no fear but for those stripes that seem to threaten to destroy his animal existence. But once grant him something that he can call his own; let him feel that the enjoyment of this *peculium*, however small, cannot be taken from him; and that he needs not dread the rapacious hand of the most powerful member of the state,—he quickly feels himself emerge into a state of mental existence.—Hope begins to warm his bosom, which generates awakening solicitude, and

and tender desires.—To avoid the dreaded ills, and attain the hoped-for bliss, he is induced to exert his faculties with vigour.—These exertions often repeated, beget a habit of industry.—Industry naturally procures wealth.—Wealth obtains the necessaries that tend to invigorate the body and fortify the mind. It produces a spirit of independence; and a spirit of independence inspires generous sensations, that produce those noble exertions which proclaim man the lord of all the other creatures on this globe, and exalt him to a superior rank, allied to celestial intelligences.

“ SUCH is then atural progress of the human mind, from its lowest state of abasement to its highest exaltation; and it is as vain to expect the last without these gradual preparatory steps, as to expect that the everlasting mountains will be moved from their places by the insignificant workings of the mole.

“ IF then it cannot be denied, that all the essential improvements of a country must be carried on among the lower ranks of people, and if no vigorous exertion can be expected from them while they continue in a weak and dependent state, it will necessarily follow, that

every attempt at improvement which does not rest upon this circumstance as its basis, must be vain and illusory.—Let no one, therefore, deceive himself with the vain hope of ever been highly benefited by the exertions of those who depend merely on his favour for subsistence. Such persons can never rise above the reptile state. There is not a truth within the reach of human knowledge more demonstrably certain, than that no man ever yet drew the greatest possible revenue that could be afforded from his demesnes, if there was but one person under him who would tamely crouch to the rod of power, or suffer himself to be trod upon by the proudest HE that e'er set foot on earth; and the loss that is thus sustained by the proprietor, will be in general exactly in proportion to the distance that his people are from this state of perfect independent security.—Let all your endeavours then, I cannot too often repeat it, be exerted to procure for them this fundamental blessing; and when this is once obtained, all the other blessings you would wish for will quickly follow.—Nor will this prove either an arduous or unpleasing task.—At first, indeed, they will stand in need of your parental tenderness, to guard
and

and protect them from the attacks of others ;
—but soon shall they acquire such strength
and internal vigour, as to be able of themselves
to repel the attacks of all invaders.

Fostered thus,

The craddled hero gains from female care
His future vigour : but, that vigour felt,
He springs indignant from his nurse's arms ;
He nods the plummy crest, he shakes the spear,
And is that awful thing which Heav'n ordain'd
The scourge of tyrants, and his country's pride*.

“ THE obstinacy, the perverseness, the in-
fidious cunning, the malevolent wickedness
of the lower ranks of people, furnish too of-
ten a theme for abuse, and are frequently em-
ployed as arguments for crushing and mal-
treating them. But these very passions, of
which you perhaps with justice complain, are
the natural and necessary effects of weakness
and imbecillity, and must be increased by every
exertion of tyrannical power.——One who
feels that he is unable to cope with another in
an open and manlike contention, is obliged in

* Mason.

self-defence to have recourse to the low insidious arts of cunning and sly evasion. Envy and malice arise from a sense of injury, which our own imbecillity prevented us from chastising in a proper manner when it was felt; and all the other low and malevolent affections in like manner take their rise from conscious weakness in man. The more, therefore, he is oppressed, the more must these detestable vices abound.——If these, therefore, are offensive to you, remove the cause, and the effects will quickly cease.——Instead of an abject slave, make the man of whom you complain, an independent active being, and you remove the cause of all his former meanness:—you enable him to vindicate his own rights with open candour, instead of insidious cunning;—you elevate him above the necessity of having recourse to mean evasive subtleties, which he now looks down upon with that contempt they justly merit. But if you first depress him to such a pitch of abasement as makes these vices necessary, and then punish him for being possessed of what you have taken so much pains to implant into his mind,—what name is it possible to invent that shall be bad enough to characterise such a species of tyranny? Yet how many millions of
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our fellow-creatures, endowed with souls that could have glowed with the most celestial ardour, are at this moment groaning beneath the merciless rod of their brutal oppressors,—and yet these unjust oppressors have the daring effrontery to lift up their head, and with impious boldness appeal to the impartial justice of Heaven for the necessity they are under of treating them thus, to eradicate the vices with which their own merciless cruelty hath debased the likeness of the Divinity originally stamped upon the mind of all mankind!

“LEAVE then to the despots of other regions the guilt of such aggravated crimes, and let them not once be named in this land of happiness and freedom.—Complain no more of the ignorance or wickedness of your dependents, if you wish to conceal your own shame, or wipe off a stain from the memory of your forefathers ; — for these are vices that spring only from weakness and dependence. If they are dependent on you, give them proper security ; — if they are rendered weak by your superior power, remove the rod from above them, and only wield it to guard them from the attacks of others.—Soon shall all these vi-

ces disappear, and you shall have the pleasure of finding yourself placed above men who are in rank and dignity of station only inferior to yourselves; and who, in candour of mind, and undisguised sincerity, are every way your equals.

“ I DWELL upon this head, because of its exceeding great importance to the internal felicity of a state, and because it never seems to have obtained that degree of attention that its great importance requires in any political arrangements that have yet come to my knowledge. With regard to other animals, the necessity of attending to it is universally acknowledged; and they are treated accordingly.— No man who wishes to obtain a prize in the race, will be so foolish as to expect that he will best succeed by starving or mal-treating his horse. He knows it is by his *vigour* alone that the prize can be obtained, and therefore he previously feeds and cherishes him with the most invigorating food, so as to inspire him with that generous ardour that can alone carry him in triumph to the goal. But by a capricious perverseness of reasoning, man seems to expect from man exertions, vigorous in proportion

proportion to his natural debility. When his faculties are impaired for want of proper nutriment, how shall they be recruited but by lenity and fostering care? But if, instead of that, his little pittance is rendered still more scanty; and if he is pushed to make exertions equal to those in high plight and vigour, he may die beneath the rod, but that is all that needs be expected from him.

“LET me, therefore entreat you all, all of you who wish to secure riches and independence to yourselves and your posterity, to attend in time to this great and important object. Instead of spending your time in futile attempts to ascertain the value of your soil, or unavailing efforts to improve your fields, turn your attention to improve your people; for no sooner shall this be done, than your fields will be effectually improved without any efforts on your part.—Instead of employing empirical theorists to ascertain the value of your farms, and put an imaginary rent upon them, which never can be realised so long as your people continue in their present state, consult those who are best acquainted with the weaknesses and wants of these people, and apply the remedies that are best adapted to remove

remove them: for I must again repeat it, your revenues never will depend so much either upon the richness of your soil, or the convenience of its situation, as upon the richness, the independence, and internal vigour of its inhabitants.

“NOTHING is more common, than to see gentlemen in Scotland carrying on improvements in agriculture, often with little pleasure, and still less profit to themselves, merely with a view to serve as a lesson to their tenants and dependents, hoping that this alone will induce them to follow their example. These hopes, however, are nearly as well founded, as those of the man, who, instead of feeding his horse with nourishing food, would think he would be rendered fit for the race, merely by making another horse, who had been properly fed and duly trained, regularly perform his exercises and wanton gambols before him. For want of internal vigour, the enfeebled animal either looks on, an unconcerned spectator; or if he attempts to follow the career, his strength is exhausted before he has attained the mid course, and remains behind weaker and more feeble than before.—These gentlemen do not seem to consider, that if ever a farmer,

farmer, who is in poor and abject circumstances, is to make improvements in agriculture, it must be by steps altogether dissimilar to those that are practised by his landlord.—He must first reap profit from some *little* articles that are perhaps entirely overlooked by the great improver, before he can attempt to go forward.—His mind must be cheered with these small profits, and enlivened by the hopes of greater, before he will begin to argue with freedom, or to observe with accuracy: but, above all, he must have an absolute certainty, that he shall be able to reap the full profit of his labour, in spite of the efforts of any one to deprive him of it;—for it is a full conviction of this alone that can ever excite to action. Without this perfect *security*, therefore, all attempts at improvement must be trifling and insignificant,

“ WITHOUT this security, even the most boundless generosity in the landlord would be vain. For should the tenant become rich by any accidental good fortune, he will search out any other way of securing his money, rather than employ it in improving a field, the profits of which he thinks may possibly be reaped by another, even where that is but a bare

bare possibility.—He will even bury his talent in the ground, so as to preserve it, rather than employ it in that way.—For this reason, the man who has encreased his own small stock a little by his industry, is more to be prized as a tenant, and will in proper circumstances exert himself more, than one who has obtained a much larger sum by any other means.

“ UNBOUNDED generosity, therefore, in a proprietor in furnishing his tenants with money, will alone be as little efficacious in promoting improvements as his own example.—A little pecuniary assistance, in proper circumstances, may be of very great utility ;—but unless in these circumstances it can be of no service.

“ AND if improvements in agriculture so necessarily depend upon the security and well-being of the lower ranks, and can be so little promoted by the efforts of those in higher station to perfect them,—it is equally certain, that other mechanical arts admit of as little improvement by the one, and stand as much in need of the assistance of the other, as it does.

“ WHEN

“ WHEN men are very keen in the pursuit of any one object, that extraordinary degree of eagerness very often makes them adopt measures that rather tend to retard than to forward the plan they had in view ; from which cause it has happened, that few manufactures that have been generally considered as great objects of national concern before they were established, have ever succeeded according to expectation.

“ FOR in these circumstances men of high rank and fortune, fired with the prospect of the innumerable advantages that they imagine would accrue from thence, and impatient of the delay that seems to be necessary on any other footing, associate themselves into companies, with a joint stock, for carrying on the particular branch of manufacture they have in view at the time ; from which necessarily result multiplied abuses in the servants entrusted with the management of their affairs, and a consequent loss in trade, which ends at length in the total failure of the undertaking.

“ BEFORE they engage in attempts of this sort, it would be well if men of superior rank would reflect, that it is impossible for them to attend

attend themselves to all the *minutiae* in the detail of practical arts that are necessary to ensure success in them; and that it is equally impossible to get servants who will bestow that attention to the management of another man's stock that he would do to his own. For these reasons the detail of practical arts ought on all occasions to be left to people in lower spheres, whose own capitals are employed, and whose prosperity in life depends upon their success;—for their ingenuity, whetted by the prospect of gain, will make many discoveries of capital importance to themselves, and their activity will be increased to that degree which only can ensure success in any manual art. To these, therefore, it ought always to be left.

“But if it be difficult for gentlemen of ordinary station to acquire perfect knowledge of the detail of mechanical arts, it is surely more difficult still for ministers of state, and others in the highest departments of civil affairs, to attain a perfect knowledge of these *minutiae*; so that when they assume to themselves a sort of dictatorial power, and prescribe positive rules for regulating the practice of individuals, they descend from their own sphere, and enter upon another, in which it is impossible they can have

have a sufficient degree of knowledge to be certain that they are acting with propriety; so that they frequently do hurt to the particular art they mean to encourage. The schemes which to their imagination appear fraught with the most salutary influences, may in general be compared to that of a man, who having, by accident, discovered that no other plant afforded so much honey as the perennial red clover, should take it into his head to fill all his fields with this plant, and to extirpate all other plants from that neighbourhood, and then should purchase innumerable bee-hives to pasture upon the plentiful food he had provided for them, in the full persuasion that he would accumulate an immense treasure by this his wise forecast:—but, behold, when the season arrives in which he should gather his honey, to his utter astonishment he discovers, that the bees are all dead, and their cells entirely empty.

“To complete the parallel, this disappointed schemer should complain of the determinate obstinacy of these pertinacious animals, who, from a wilful perverseness of disposition, refused to taste a morsel of that delicious food that he had provided for them, but had wilfully starved

ed themselves, that he might be ruined by their failure. It is not perhaps till long after he has vented his spleen in this manner, that some man of sober understanding ventures to tell him, that although he had indeed provided as much honey as might have been sufficient to sustain a much larger number of bees than had been put upon it; yet as the proboscis of the bee was not of sufficient length to reach the bottom of the cup in which that honey was contained, (the nectarium of that flower), the poor animals were absolutely starved for want of food, in spite of their utmost endeavours to reach it. His eyes are in consequence of this discovery opened at last; and he sees, when too late, that his favourite scheme has miscarried merely through his own ignorance and presumptuous folly.

“It is not common to hear mere animals accused of such a crime as that here specified; but as if man were more stupid, as well as more malevolent, than any of these, he is often accused of such absurd acts of malevolence and folly. It is thus that Vanity and Pride offer incense at shrine of *Power*, and emulously strive, often too successfully, to make her blind to the dictates of reason and common sense.

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In order to free her from the blame of having committed a mistake, *Humanity* is accused of a crime contrary to the established order of things. But there can be no doubt but that man, as well as every other animal, must in general pursue that line of conduct that promises most effectually to contribute towards his own felicity, and to preserve his life as long as possible.

“**INSTEAD** of this supercilious self-conceit, it would argue a greater degree of understanding, if they would rest satisfied, that people in the lower spheres of life were much more capable of discovering what would most immediately promote their own interest, and what would be the most effectual means of prosecuting it, than those in more exalted stations could possibly do: for a very moderate degree of attention will enable any one to discover, that some persons in the lowest spheres of life, earn a comfortable subsistence to themselves and families, by following employments that the *pert* political arithmetician would, without hesitation, demonstrate could not be carried on without loss; while other persons shall be irretrievably ruined by following other employments, which, according to his *infallible* calculations, could not possibly fail to enrich them in a very short space of time.

“**SINCE**

"SINCE such is the uncertainty of political arithmetic, those who have no other rule by which they may be directed in their schemes of improvement, ought surely to proceed with a very great degree of cautious diffidence.

"ON these principles it seems evident, that men of high rank, and extensive property, will most effectually advance their own interest, and that of the country in general, by encouraging arts and manufactures *through the medium of others*; and that their efforts will ever prove abortive when they attempt to engage in these employments *directly* on their own account. — Their chief business, therefore, ought to be, to endeavour to discover *bars* that lie in the way of improvements, — to smoothe difficulties, — to remove obstructions, — and to prevent impositions and frauds of every sort. To become the protector of the weak, and the supporter of the indigent, are desirable offices; — offices that well besit the man of elevated rank and distinguished fortune; and these are all the offices that fall to his share in a well-ordered society. — By pursuing that line of conduct, he moves with becoming dignity, and at the same time in the most effectual manner promotes the general prosperity of the state, and by consequence

quence his own immediate interest. When he attempts to do more, he usually deranges the political œconomy to such a degree by his violent exertions, as is productive of much harm instead of the good that he intended.—The reply of one of the deputies from a manufacturing town in France to Mr. Colbert, when he insisted to know what restrictive regulations he should make most effectually to promote the interest of the particular manufactures in that town, was so liberal and judicious as deserves to be engraved in letters of gold. *Leave us, said this just and liberal-minded manufacturer, leave us to ourselves: we need no compulsive laws to induce us to pursue our own interest; the interest of no one needs be sacrificed for our convenience; and we only wish that our efforts to benefit ourselves may not be cramped by any undue preference being given to others.* This is all that the lower ranks of persons ought to require; and these are all the offices that the higher orders of the state ought ever to attempt.

“To encourage the growth of fine wool by proper premiums for a time, will be removing a bar to the improvement of the country that far exceeds the power of the lower rank of

people to perform of themselves.——To encourage industrious manufacturers to settle in proper parts of the country, and to support them till they shall be thoroughly established in trade;—To establish proper markets and marts in convenient parts of the country, and to encourage people to resort to these by judicious rewards, and continued attention, for a time, till they can go on of themselves;—To take care that the rude materials for manufactures may always be obtained at a reasonable price;—To guard against an excessive rise in the price of provisions and other indispensable necessities of life;—To form roads, and open proper channels of communication, between one part of the country and another;—and to see that the inhabitants be not cramped by any restrictive laws,——are perhaps all the encouragement that ever ought to be given to any country by the public.——But these particulars in a state beginning to improve, ought to be attended to with the most sedulous care.——It belongs to private individuals to avoid cramping their own dependents by unreasonable restraints or exactions, and to protect them from these hindrances from others. And if all these particulars are attended to, it will soon be found, that the people are neither slow to perceive,

perceive, nor negligent in adopting those plans that will most effectually promote their own interest. But if these primary objects are not attended to, no considerable improvement can ever be expected to take place.

"THESE general observations are alike applicable to all cases.—But I would now wish to turn your attention particularly to the improvement chiefly recommended in the foregoing sheets, that of encreasing the number of sheep, and of establishing the woollen manufacture in Scotland.

"THE only objection of seeming importance that occurs to me that could be made to rearing sheep in the Highlands of Scotland is, that there would not perhaps be a ready market for this encreased number of sheep, and that therefore their carcases would become of little value to the farmer.

"THERE is no room to doubt, that should the number of sheep be very much augmented, the price of mutton would become lower in Scotland than it is at present.—But Nature here, as in almost every case when left to herself,

self, provides a remedy along with the disease.

“ ON account of the high price of mutton in England for a century past, the natives have been in the practice of rearing that species of stock for themselves.—But if, in consequence of the plan recommended, sheep should become very numerous in Scotland, it would soon be found that they could be bought cheaper in that country, and driven to England, than they could be reared there; in consequence of which, the breeding of sheep in England would be given up as an unprofitable trade, and the English would depend upon Scotland in a great measure for lean sheep, as they at present depend upon it for lean cattle.—This would open a great and growing market for sheep, which would become an important article of commerce.

“ I CALL it a growing market :—for as the English farmers at present find it greatly their profit to bring their mutton as early to the shambles as possible, the greatest part of their sheep are hastily fattened up, and slaughtered between one and two years old; at which age the mutton is so bad, as not to be eatable by any person

person who has ever been accustomed to taste ripe mutton. But as the wool would be an article of greater value to the Scots farmer in proportion to the carcase, he would naturally keep his sheep to a greater age before he offered them to sale ; and as these would require to be afterwards fattened in England, they could hardly in any case be brought to the shambles before they were of a proper age ; and, by consequence, the mutton would be superlatively excellent.—It would be some time before this would come to be generally known ; but as that kind of mutton came gradually to be more common in the English market, the inhabitants would perceive the difference, and prize it accordingly ; which would bring it into such request, as to banish the present English mutton almost entirely. For there is no room to doubt, that any person who has been once accustomed to eat mutton of a proper age, would never be prevailed with to eat young mutton through choice any more.—This circumstance could not fail to give the Scots mutton such a vogue as to secure for it a constant and steady market through all England.

“ On this account the demand for sheep to England would in a short time become much more

more considerable, and much more steady, than it is at present for black cattle; because the superiority of Scots mutton over English would be infinitely greater than that of Scots beef ever can be over English beef:—A superiority which is perhaps in some cases at present more imaginary than real, and which undoubtedly might be easily reduced to nothing in a short time, by a due attention to their breed of cattle. But the English could never rival the Scots mutton, except by keeping their sheep to a proper age; which they could not possibly afford to do in the rich feeding counties of England. This, therefore, indicates another very manifest advantage that would accrue to Scotland in breeding sheep instead of black cattle.

“ But there still remains one other argument in favour of sheep-rearing in the Highlands of Scotland above cattle, which is of such importance, as ought to be alone sufficient to overbalance a myriad of objections, could any such be found; that is, the security that the owner of flocks possesses over that of the owner of herds of cattle. I now allude to the disease among the horned cattle;—a disease which has hitherto baffled all attempts to cure it where it has once taken place,—and which

which may be spread through a whole kingdom by such a trifling circumstance, as ought to make every man whose property consists entirely in cattle to tremble for his safety.—Hitherto, indeed, by the merciful providence of Heaven, and the parental care of our gracious Sovereign, this grievous pestilence has not found access into Scotland; but should it once get footing there, who can describe the ruin that must ensue?—Every individual in the Highlands would be stripped of all his property, and absolute and total depopulation must inevitably be the consequence.—The prospect is so alarmingly dreadful as needs but to be named; and I am sensible that there is not an inhabitant of these countries who shall read this, and who shall likewise seriously attend to the facts below, who will not shudder with horror at the prospect,—and bless Heaven, which hath hitherto preserved him from such unavoidable ruin as must have overwhelmed him, should that pestilence have visited his native country*.

“ Is

* Mr. URBAN, *Rotterdam, November 14. 1769.*

Ever since the year 1740, the distemper among the horned cattle has been lurking in these provinces; in that and the following year it raged with more violence than now.

From

"Is it wise in a man to sleep secure upon the very edge of a precipice, over which the slightest accident, almost a breath of wind, may precipitate

From 1761 to 1767 it was scarce perceptible; but in May 1768, it appeared in the provinces of Overijssel and Guelderland, and spread with great rapidity. At Nymwegen best beef was sold at 14d. per lb.

At Daventer, in the town-fields, were grazing in the spring of the present year at least 900 cows and oxen; the plague swept away in June and July between 500 and 600 of them: every method was tried for putting a stop to its progress, but without effect. A poor widow, in the decline of life, with eight children to provide for, having fifty-nine milch cows, by which she supported herself and family, has now only ten left, and those not yet out of danger. Numbers in these provinces are in the same unhappy situation. But what is still more dreadful, and hardly to be credited in a Christian country, villains make a practice in the night, of cutting off the udders of those cows that the plague has left; no less than twenty-six were so served in one night.—I am, &c.

V——r.

S I R,

Rotterdam, December 17. 1769.

In my last I promised you a more ample account of the progress of the distemper among the horned cattle in our provinces, and in this I shall fulfil that promise, by sending you a perfect list, according to the returns given in by order of the magistracy, to the end of September last, with some additional remarks. After the assembly of the states meet, what further occurs worth communicating, shall be transmitted by,

Sir, Yours, &c.

V——r.

A LIST

precipitate him in a moment?—Is it not rather fit that he should *up and be doing yet* while he has it in his power to save himself? Sheep are liable to some disasters, but these with care and attention may be in a great measure guarded against. He who is possess-

A LIST, shewing the state of the distemper among the Horned Cattle, in the districts of South and North Holland, in the month of September 1769.

SOUTH QUARTER, or Province of HOLLAND PROPERLY.

<i>Districts.</i>	<i>Alive in April.</i>	<i>Sick.</i>	<i>Died of the Sick-ness.</i>	<i>Recovered.</i>	<i>In Health.</i>
Amsterdam -	8740	5786	4919	816	2954
Brielle - -	3775	2426	1607	483	1349
Delft - - -	10669	3868	2390	690	6801
Dordt - - -	2202	889	552	141	1313
Gornichem -	1926	733	508	149	1193
Gouda, or Tergou	9527	5679	4193	1142	3848
Haarlem - -	4062	1523	1087	326	2539
Leyden - - -	9131	3906	2642	941	5225
Rotterdam -	784	344	231	47	440
S'Hage, or Hague	381	151	111	25	230
Schiedam - -	4516	2251	1612	326	2185
Schoonhoven -	4613	1699	1231	282	2914
	60326	29255	21083	5368	31071

N. B. Every town here specified (in alphabetical order) have each of them their *Ambagt*, which denotes as far as their power of criminal justice reaches, although the lands are in property of their owners or occupiers. Every town also has its own lands or fields, which are let by leases to several farmers; though some possessors of land, paying land-tax, do rent them to boot.

NORTH

ed of them, therefore, may rest in reasonable security.—But those whose all depends upon cattle, may be irretrievably ruined in a moment without the possibility of any any relief.

NORTH HOLLAND, or WEST FRIESLAND.

Recovered	Cattle old and young	Yet sick	Grown sick	Dead	In health.
5037	41664	2331	19288	11824	22376

Thus from April to August 1769, both inclusive, being five months,

In the South Quarter, Got through the disease	5368	Died of it	21083
In the North Quarter, —————	5037	—————	11824
	10405		32907

I have been informed, that the poor, who have bought the beef of some of the infected beasts at a cheap rate, with a design to preserve it for winter-provisions, have been grievously disappointed: for after salting it, and putting it up in barrels, as their custom is, they have been obliged to throw it away, having turned as black as a coal in the pickle, without taking salt. By this misfortune the distresses of the poor have been aggravated, as provisions of all kinds are now immoderately dear.

Last week I saw a milch cow that had recovered from the distemper sold for a hundred and fifty florins. The farmer who purchased it, paid the money with pleasure, with a view of recruiting his stock; having, out of thirty beasts grazing in his fields in July last, only one ox, one milch cow, and three calves, left; the rest having died of the plague.

Judge what a price provisions must be at. Butter has been sold for forty florins the firkin of 80 lb. wt.; veal sells

"Ye gentlemen of landed property in these countries, your all depends upon the animals that graze the fields, can you sit still unconcerned, and not endeavour to secure to your-

sells from eight to twelve stivers a pound; good beef at five stivers; pork one fourth dearer than usual; and a pint of milk at two stivers.

I am told, that at the Hague, the cowkeepers are almost all ruined, notwithstanding this advanced price, as their cattle are kept in stalls, and when the infection begins, the udder grows dry, the cow loaths her food, and, unless she recovers, can never be brought to eat.

I have seen several opened that have died of the infection. Their flesh appears sound, fresh, and of a good colour; but the entrails much inflamed; the liver coal-black, the lungs inflated with watery bladders, and the throat imposthumated, and covered with putrid spots.

A premium of ten thousand guilders has been offered by the States-General to the person who shall discover a remedy; but though it is now more than eight months since this reward was published, it has not yet been obtained. Many quacks, it is true, have put in their claims, by pretended cures, that when brought to the test have been found unsuccessful.

I am sorry to say, that this plague has shewn itself in the province of Zealand, on the island of Tex Goes, Noord Beveland, and in Brabant, Staat Vlanderen, notwithstanding the precautions taken by Prince Charles, and the placards made and published at Brussels.

You may learn by this true representation, how happy your island is to be so far separated from the infection, as not to be within its reach. The misery it has occasioned here, is not to be expressed; and if it should please God to continue this severe visitation much longer, an universal bankruptcy amongst our boors must ensue. *Gentleman's Magazine*.

selves

selves a moral certainty of something for your posterity? if the cattle are swept away, where are you? Sheep offer themselves as a most valuable surety, and as the only one which your situation admits of.

“ONE circumstance, and only one, remains to make the projected plan for improving Scotland by means of sheep and the woollen manufacture complete; and that is, to obtain a repeal of the destructive law preventing the exportation of wool. Whether it will be possible at once to overcome popular prejudices so far as to get it repealed, I think extremely doubtful; but every well-wisher of Britain ought to exert himself to undeceive the members of the supreme legislative council in this respect, as the well-being of millions depends upon it*.”

THESE,

* It would seem, if the Scots members were serious in insisting to repeal this law, that the English members in general would not much oppose it as to Scotland, for these reasons.

In the first place, the English will not in general allow, that it is possible to produce as fine wool in Scotland as in England;—therefore the exportation of Scots wool would not tend to hurt the English woollen manufacture.

And, in the second place, if, according to the prevailing mode of reasoning, they should believe that the price of wool would be raised, if it were allowed to be exported,

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THESE, my dear Sir, are some of the arguments that might be employed for inducing the gentlemen in Scotland heartily to concur in the plan proposed, or in some other equally efficacious for improving it.—I have great doubt, however, if, in the present situation of affairs, these, or any other arguments, would be sufficient to induce the generality of the nation to believe, that their own interest could only be effectually promoted by forwarding the interest of others in the first place. If their own fruitless efforts to benefit themselves by any other plan does not convince them,—no arguments of mine could ever be sufficient for that purpose.—I shall examine the other particulars you mention in my next.

it would follow, that the Scots wool by that means would become much dearer than English wool of the same quality, which would effectually prevent the establishment of the woollen manufacture in Scotland, and thus prevent her from ever becoming the rival of the English.—By which mode of reasoning all the partial favourers of the monopoly of the English woollen manufacture would favour the bill.—I would be willing thus to employ their prejudices for forwarding the interest of the public.

OBSERVATIONS

These, my dear Sir, are some of the arguments that might be employed for inducing the gentlemen in Scotland hardly to concur in the plan proposed, or in some other equally objectionable for improving it.—I have great doubts, however, if, in the present situation of their minds, or any other arguments, would be likely to induce the generosity of the Scotch people, that their own interests could be sacrificed to the promotion of foreign industry. It is not, I think, to be expected, that they will be so easily induced to promote the interests of others at the expense of their own. I have no doubt, that the plan does not require them to sacrifice to it, but that it would be a sacrifice to the other part of the plan.—I shall examine the other part of the plan in my next.

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OBSERVATIONS
ON

OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER SIXTEENTH.

C O N T E N T S.

Observations on entails.—This mode of transmitting heritage, though necessary under the Feodal aristocracy, is improper since a more equal system of legislation took place in Europe.—The improvement of Scotland has been much retarded by still retaining this barbarous mode of transmitting inheritance, which is alike destructive of the domestic happiness of private families, and the general prosperity of the state.—It ought therefore to be abolished;—or, at least, very much restricted.—The mode of trial in *civil* causes is less favourable to the liberty of the subject in Scotland, than in England; which tends greatly to retard the improvement of the country.—Smuggling,—another cause of preventing improvements.—Advantages that Scotland possesses over other nations, particularly England,—in respect to poor's rates, the church-government.—Fisheries.—Observations on the salmon-fishing;—on the small white fishing;—how it may be augmented;—on the great white fishing.—Restrictive regulations with regard to it destructive.—On the white herring fishing.—Strictures on the British laws relating to this great national object.—In what particulars they have been defective.—A premium proposed for a new and better method of curing herrings.—On the British whale-fishing.—Strictures on the British laws relating to it.—Hints for amending them.—Conclusion.

OBSERVATIONS

ON

NATIONAL INDUSTRY.

LETTER SIXTEENTH.

TO MR. LONDON.

DEAR SIR,

December 24. 1775.

THE beneficent Creator of this universe hath framed the original laws of nature with such consummate wisdom, that in all cases the destruction of one thing serves as a basis for the renovation of another; and the corruption of human institutions are often productive of more extensive benefits to man, than the most perfect systems he could deliberately have

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invented

invented by his own most penetrating sagacity. It is from the corruption of the see of Rome that we have derived all the benefits that have flowed from the reformation in religious matters; and it is from the corruption of a Feodal aristocracy that our unrivalled civil constitution has gradually been matured into that perfect system of political liberty which is justly thought to constitute our highest felicity.

BUT nothing in which human counsels have a share is altogether perfect. Man's judgment is warped by prejudices; and he is constantly swayed by passions and affections that pervert his will, and mislead his understanding. It is not, therefore, surprising, that our minds should still be infected with a slavish veneration for some religious tenets that derive their origin from the superstitions of Rome, which were not entirely purged away at the reformation: nor is it to be wondered at, if we still retain an unreasonable attachment to some favourite political tenets that were supposed to constitute the highest perfection of reason, while the Feodal system of government was universally prevalent in Europe. But it is the duty of the candid enquirer to point out these errors whenever they can be discovered,

discovered, and to expose with becoming severity, the mischiefs that have been derived, or may accrue, to society in consequence of these unreasonable prejudices.

WHEN there was no general protector of the state, nor universal system of laws by which the whole members of the community were governed, every individual was obliged to rely on the power of his own arm, or on that of some other still more potent chieftain, for protection. In these circumstances it was wise,—it was prudent,—it was even in some measure indispensably necessary, to prevent property from being divided into small portions; and in conformity with these ideas a system of legislation was universally adopted, by which landed property descended without division to the nearest male relation of the former proprietor on his decease. And in conformity with the same idea they even went farther, and rendered the lands altogether unalienable in certain cases.

THE first part of this system, however unjust in itself, has been adopted by almost every European state; and however opposite to that spirit of equal liberty and commerce that con-

stitutes the most striking feature of our happy constitution, has been retained even in Great Britain herself. But by the cunning policy of your Henry VII. the power of the latter part of the institution was broken in England. To which very circumstance, notwithstanding the inconveniencies that attend the imperfect palliative he was thus obliged to adopt, you ought, in a great measure, to ascribe that happy revolution in political jurisprudence that has taken place in Britain since that period.

BUT our Scottish monarchs, less cunning or less powerful than him, never dared to attack, even in the most indirect manner, this powerful bulwark of aristocratic power; but, instead of that, as the utility of such an institution gradually disappeared, and as the hurtful effects of it began to be more and more felt, under a government when the general security of the subject encreased, they, as if afraid that this child of despotism might have been smothered under the general liberty of the subject, devised new methods of giving it strength and stability; so that, at the very time that your Henry was sapping the foundation of this bulwark of Gothic power, the King of Scotland was strengthening it in his dominions, by
a system

a system of laws relating to *entails*, which were then established by the positive decrees of the state, and still take place in this kingdom, which have hitherto retarded the improvement of this country in a most powerful manner, and must continue gradually to produce more and more baneful effects so long as they shall be tolerated, till it end at last in the total ruin of the state, unless it be in time prevented. And we all know, that it is not after any destructive power has been fully established, that it can be attacked with the most rational prospect of success.

I FLATTER myself, that, however much some others might be disposed to accuse me of drawing an unreasonable gloomy picture of fancied ills that probably never can arise from this cause,—*you*, who are so well versed in history, and the revolutions of nations, will concur with me in being sensible, that these are not *imaginary*, but *real* ills ; which not only *may*, but *must* be experienced, if not in time prevented. What, I pray, has been the cause of the ruin of every state ancient and modern ? Search their annals with the most scrupulous care, and it will be found, that *an unequal division of property among the different orders of the*

the people has been the real source of all their misfortunes. And what reason have we to think that this general law will be reversed with regard to ourselves? Are not mankind actuated still by the same passions and desires as on former occasions? We have no other prospect of evading the same evils that others have experienced, but from the wisdom and equity of the British parliament, which, it is to be hoped, will see and check this great evil before it arrives at its greatest height. But the sooner this is done the better: — its baneful influence is already experienced in this part of the country, and tends to prevent that general prosperity in which the real strength of the state can alone consist.

IN a country which has a dependence on commerce, nothing can be more incongruous, than to have any part of the public funds of the state indispensibly locked up, and prevented from ever coming to the market, or from being applied to any active use in trade? — Yet such is the certain and unavoidable consequence of that ancient Gothic law, which, in many respects, operates like a dead weight constantly tending to retard the progress of every step towards improvement in Scotland :
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the effects of which, although severely felt by numberless individuals, do not seem to have been hitherto so carefully attended to as its importance deserves.——I shall, therefore, dwell upon it a little for your satisfaction.

If we endeavour to trace the consequences that result from the law establishing entails upon the disposition and circumstances of the inhabitants of those countries in which it prevails, we shall perceive, that the most obvious of these consequences is the producing a number of indigent people in a genteel station in life. All the children of a man possessed of a good landed estate, are naturally bred up in their father's family, where, while young, they are accustomed to see a mode of living, and acquire a taste for it, which none of them, save one, have any prospect of ever being able to realise in their own families. When the sons grow up to men's estate, the father, by being unable to borrow money upon a fund that must fail with his own life, finds himself debarred from entering his sons to business, where their capital, would be too small to be sufficient to support them in that line of life in which they had been accustomed to move. The young persons themselves too, having imbibed

imbibed ideas of their own *gentility* very early, and being accustomed to look down with a sort of contempt on people of business as below them, are but little disposed to associate with them, or enter into that line of life, were their parents better able to support them in it than they usually are. The necessary consequence of all this is, the younger children of gentlemen of fortune either enter into the army or the navy,—or go to some foreign country to try what they can do for themselves,—while commerce, and other beneficial trades at home are left to people of mean education and inferior rank, who have but seldom a stock sufficient for carrying it on with the vigour that it ought to be, and who are on these accounts held in a lower degree of estimation among all ranks of people, than the important station they occupy ought naturally to claim.

You will easily perceive, that this circumstance alone naturally accounts for some of the most striking features in the national character of the Scots.—A liberal education may in general be expected to be given to all the children of a man of an ample fortune while he is alive.—But these children are afterwards
scattered

scattered abroad through all the regions of the earth, and are often obliged in foreign countries to accept of employments far beneath the prospects they had entertained in their younger years ; — employments that fall to the share of adventurers of lower rank in general from other countries. Hence their learning and address are in general above the par of other nations. Stimulated likewise by the constant desire of supporting that rank in life which they think is their due, they are perhaps more assiduous in their respective stations, and pique themselves more upon maintaining the character of a gentleman, than others do. Which qualities, although they may at length procure respect and esteem, are always disgusting and unamiable to strangers.—Pardon this short digression.

IN countries, on the other hand, where a man has the entire command of all the funds of which he is possessed, the natural desire to see all his children happy around him, prompts him to push his younger children into business as soon as he can. His estate is a fund of credit, by which he supports his younger children early in life. — The elder son becomes in this manner a man of less estate and dignity than

than he would be:—he feels more the wants of a man, and is therefore more near the same line with his brothers. — The younger brothers too, by often becoming rich themselves, support that family-estate in the end of their life, which so liberally helped them in the beginning of it.—This establishes a mutual exchange of good offices, which is productive of the happiest effects,—and renders the man of business and the country-gentleman nearer the same rank in the estimation of themselves, and of every one else, than they are in Scotland.—You will also recognise in this sketch the origin of some of the most striking features in the national character of the English; I wish to God it were universally prevalent over all the island!

WHEN a man looks around him, and compares the few benefits that result to any individual from this Gothic institution, with the innumerable list of ills it produces to those very individuals it seems calculated chiefly to favour, it appears a little surprising, that there should be found almost any person who do not heartily concur in wishing it abolished.

ONE would imagine, that nature had intended, that all the children of a parent should be

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be equally dear to him; and that he should be as anxiously solicitous to provide for the younger branches as for the older one. — But, by this institution, he finds himself tied up from serving them; and his elder son, who usually knows very well that he must one day have the estate, is not from that circumstance induced so to act as to show that he deserves it.—This too often breeds internal trouble in families, and embitters all domestic felicity. —In such a situation, of what avail are titles and a splendid equipage?—The shepherd, who retires to his humble cot after the toils of the day, and finds his children happy in one another, enjoys a lot far more to be coveted, than one who should have all the revenues of the Indies, without domestic unity and content.—We would, therefore, suppose that a man in these circumstances would wish to break down this oppressive restraint upon his own enjoyment,

BUT there are innumerable instances in which a man shall not even have the satisfaction of seeing his estate descend to his own children.—He has perhaps a numerous family of daughters without a son,—all of whom he must leave helpless and indigent, without provisions in
any

any way suited to the rank he holds in life ; while his ample revenue descends to a stranger, whom he perhaps detests. The debts he had contracted before he came to his fortune, in the *bey-day* of youth, perhaps prevent him from accumulating a fund for their support, and he leaves them dependent on the wide world in some measure for subsistence. Is the lot of such a one to be envied ? Surely no one can think that *he* would vote for the continuance of such a law.

It would be painful to enter more minutely into the detail of the domestic uneasiness that so copiously flow from this system of legislation, under which thousands in this country perpetually do groan ; and yet so powerful a motive is vanity with some, that, merely for the pleasure of perpetuating a name that shall descend to distant ages, they shall not only themselves be contented to bear all these accumulated hardships, but shall coolly resolve to perpetuate the same distresses to their posterity through all the successive ages of time, if it were in their power.

It is from this principle that we meet with many persons who, with an insatiable greediness,

ness, thirst after land, as the *summum bonum* of all earthly felicity; for the obtaining of which they voluntarily deny themselves on some occasions the common necessities of life; and which they no sooner obtain, than they secure to one favourite child, under the strictest entail that human wisdom can devise.—Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity. And surely no species of it is more ridiculously foolish than this one. Shall such a puny thing as man, with impious audacity, stand up and oppose his feeble regulations to the immutable decrees of the great Creator of this universe?—He looketh in his wrath, and the nations are discomfited: with the breath of his nostrils he sweepeth them from off the earth, and the proudest nations, with all their proudest works, are alike buried in perpetual oblivion. Where is Babylon the mighty! Tyre and Sydon are in ashes; and *eternal* Rome herself, as those vain conquerors of the world were proud to call her, is but a striking monument of the fleeting instability of all earthly grandeur.—And dost thou think, O feeble man, that thy name shall remain, when such mighty works have failed; or that thy little policy shall prevail, while the very traces of whole nations that were renowned for wisdom,

dom, have disappeared on the earth! I know not to what I could so properly liken the efforts of a man thus employed, as to that of a spider, which should vainly hope, by means of the flimsy thread spun from his own bowels, to fix with immoveable firmness to the shore, a ship, the pride of the British navy. So long as all remains at rest, he looks with fond complacency on his labours, and thinks that they shall remain to latest posterity a monument of his power and wisdom. But no sooner does the tide begin to flow, and heave the massy vessel from her bed, than all these puny bands are broken asunder, and he sees with infinite regret that all his labours have been utterly in vain.

EXACTLY such must be the end of all these cunning devices of man to perpetuate his name. While the world is quiet, all may go on as he wishes for; but the slightest revolution in human affairs, puts a final end to all his hopes; and another system, perhaps equally vain, is built upon its ruins.

SINCE then our hopes of distant aggrandizement are vain,—let us rather strive to render those happy who are within reach of our own
good

good offices at present, than punish ourselves, and do hurt to others, for the sake of cherishing a phantom of the brain.—Short is the road that leads to happiness, were we but wise enough to follow it.—The labours of that man alone have a chance to descend to posterity, and bless them,—whose efforts rest upon the firm basis of justice and humanity;—for these labours co-operating with the immutable laws of nature, shall be respected by all parties, and shall remain unshaken amidst all the revolutions to which human affairs are perpetually subjected.

ENTAILS, therefore, are public nuisances, and ought as such to be abolished.—They are the immediate source of infinite disquietude in private families; they retard every public undertaking, and only serve to foster a spirit of pride, of idleness, and of despotism.—How incompatible, these, with the desires of a free people!

If we view this law as affecting the public interest, and the prosperity of the state, we shall find that it deserves equally to be condemned. Nothing contributes so much to enrich and improve a country, *in any situation,*

as a number of small estates.—But large estates in corners of the country, *remote from the court*, are a most intolerable hurt to it:—for as these rich proprietors naturally resort to court, their tenants are left under the management of a steward, whose interest is not so necessarily connected with the improvement of the country, and well-being of the peasantry, as that of the proprietor is, and who does not therefore attend so much to these things as might otherwise be the case;—and as the rents are thus constantly carried out of the country, the efforts of its inhabitants are rendered exceedingly languid on that account.

BUT while the country is parcelled out among a number of small proprietors, who are obliged to reside upon their own estates,—every one is studious to improve and adorn his native seat to the utmost of his power.—The money he receives as rents are spent among his own people.—He gives bread to the poor, and diffuses blessings around him.

CARE ought therefore to be taken, that in the distant provinces of the nation especially, overgrown estates should be rare; and on this account no mode of inheriting is so favourable for
a free

a free people as that of Gavelkind;—which necessarily produces a numerous yeomanry, and by consequence a number of active, spirited, industrious subjects, capable at all times of executing every enterprize, whether for the defence or improvement of a country, that a wise government could require. But the law of entails, which operates in a manner directly the reverse with this, tends to break the spirit of the people, to retard improvements, and to depopulate the country;—on all which accounts no wise government ought to tolerate it.

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An attempt was made some years ago to break these entails entirely;—but the opposition was so strong by many of the members for Scotland, that it could not be carried through. Some trifling alterations were made, chiefly intended to promote improvements by the proprietor. These, however, will produce little other effect, unless it be to generate innumerable law-suits; which may perhaps be attended with the good effect of making many become tired of an institution that is attended with so many vexatious circumstances.

PERHAPS if liberty were granted to entail lands to a certain extent, and no higher, for
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each order of the nobility, all the good effects that can be hoped for from entails might be secured, and the inconveniencies in a great measure obviated. It seems to be reasonable, that a nobleman should be possessed of an estate suitable to his rank, otherwise he degrades the order in which he is placed. Our forefathers seem to have judged wisely in this respect, by making the title to go with the estate;—but since that cannot be permitted at present, it would not seem unreasonable to grant by law a power to each order of the nobility to entail to such an extent, and no further;—suppose a Duke to the extent of 5000l. a year,—a Marquis 3000l.—an Earl 2000l.—a Viscount 1000l.—and a Baron 500l.;—and as a Knight-Baronet ranks above a private gentleman, suppose they also might entail to the extent of 100l. a year.—These sums would prevent the several families from ever being reduced to *absolute want*, and at the same time could occasion no hurt to the country*. I imagine that if such a plan were proposed, it would take off a good deal of the opposition, when the question about abo-

* A law might even be framed on these principles, by which the noble families in the realm might be more effectually secured from dependence than they are at present, by obliging every Nobleman to entail lands to the above extent, instead of simply permitting it.

lishing entails should come to be debated in parliament.

ANOTHER circumstance that has retarded the improvement of Scotland, is our mode of trials in civil causes, which is less calculated for inspiring a spirit of liberty, or for jealously guarding the privileges of the subjects, than that of England. All *criminal* causes are tried in Scotland, as well as in England, by a jury;—and by a jury constituted upon more equitable principles than that of England, although still liable to some objections:—but *civil* causes are finally referred to the arbitration of the judges in all cases. Hence it must necessarily happen, that in those breaches of the peace which tend to harass individuals in the enjoyment of domestic comforts, especially in the lower spheres of life; as the judges cannot be impressed with such a lively and indignant sense of the injury, as those who may themselves have felt it, or who shall be under immediate danger of suffering in like manner; the fines, therefore, that are awarded against those who attack the liberties of the subject, especially in distant corners of the country, by the inferior courts, are often so trifling, as not to be sufficient to deter men

of great fortune from encroaching too far upon their sacred privileges, or for giving the meanest individual a lively sense of his own security and importance.

NOR is the advantage that the subject enjoys from the mode of trial by jury in civil cases, confined merely to the benefit that the poor enjoy from the above-named circumstance; for where cases are tried by jury, they must of necessity be determined in a much more summary manner, than where a judge alone can finally decide on the case, and who is therefore at liberty to deliberate on it as long as he may incline.—Hence it happens, that in law-suits in Scotland, a man may, if he pleases, plead so many causes of delay,—by starting new difficulties when the process comes near a decision, as to have it in his power, if he is a richer man than his antagonist, to subject him to so many vexations, and to oblige him to incur such a heavy expence, as to make him be a very great loser, even when he at last obtains the clearest decision in his favour.—You will easily perceive, that these circumstances being well enough known both by the rich and the poor, must necessarily tend to repress the spirit of liberty in the one, and to encourage

encourage a spirit of domination in the other. For a rich man, conscious of the superiority he can thus have over a poor one, even where justice is clearly on the side of the latter, will often take advantage of this circumstance to oppress him, or accomplish his total ruin, by leading him through a train of tedious law-suits from one court to another, though cast in every one of them ;— the expence to the one being a trifle he can easily spare, while it consumes the little all of the other——To avoid this, therefore, he is fain to crouch beneath the rod, and only sigh in secret against that injustice he feels, but dares not oppose.

THIS is the original cause of that diffidence that the lower people in Scotland have of those above them, and of that deep-rooted hatred of the great, which often breaks out in secret acts of malevolence ; and it is likewise the cause of that gloomy reserve and melancholy dejection which you took notice of in the lower ranks of people here. From this circumstance likewise arises that tendency to litigation, of which the people in Scotland are but too justly accused. For law-suits here are not so often a struggle for obtaining justice,

in a contention for power; inasmuch that it has become a common proverb, that such a man would rather have an inch of his will as an ell of his purse. This is also a sore distress.

The best remedy that could be applied, would be, to obtain a law for trial by jury in civil cases. But this, I am afraid, we need not expect. The only remedy that remains, depends upon our judges. For if they should make an example of two or three conspicuous offenders, by punishing them in a most exemplary way;—if they should in all cases make every trespass against the general liberty of the subject be expiated by high penalties and personal punishment; the evil would be in some measure abated: but if they shall continue such trifling fines, as *ten* or *twenty* pounds against a man who shall deliberately enter into the dwelling-house of another, and there strike and maltreat him, so as to endanger his life, what security can any man enjoy?—And if a man who shall have been imprisoned by another for a *supposed* civil trespass, and shall clearly prove that he was entirely innocent of the crime, nor did any thing that could give a handle to raise a suspicion against him, shall be able to obtain no redress at all for such a
daring

daring outrage, we shall be forced to acknowledge, that the liberties of the subject are not guarded with such jealous care in Scotland as they ought to be; and that therefore it is not surprising if the common people are not capable of those great exertions that can only spring from liberty and independence.

ANOTHER inconvenience that Scotland labours under, in common with England, and which has tended very much to stop improvements here, is the temptation to smuggling; to which they are so much subjected by the numberless restraints on trade in Britain, and by the convenience of their situation for carrying on that destructive kind of clandestine commerce.

IN justice to the country-gentlemen of Scotland, however, I must observe, that this pernicious trade has met with every discouragement from them for some time past, that might be expected to be produced by a thorough conviction in them of the very great prejudice that it occasions to their essential interests. But so long as the duties on certain commodities of general consumption shall continue to be so very high, and so long as it shall
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be the interest of the officers of the revenue, that smuggling should continue, it may, by the efforts of the country-gentlemen, be moderated, but can never be entirely suppressed.

In the mean time the real interest of these country-gentlemen, and of Scotland in general, is essentially hurt by this circumstance. All improvements in agriculture or manufactures in Scotland must begin upon the sea-coast, as it is there only that a ready market can be found for the products or manufactures of the country.—But so long as the persons on the sea-coast shall turn their chief attention towards smuggling, these improvements must be at a stand. Fortunes suddenly acquired by a lucky chance, are usually spent with an unthrifty prodigality; and bankruptcies, the necessary result of great losses, are not only productive of immediate ruin to the parties concerned, and convulse the internal oeconomy of the state, but also lead to those daring crimes that are produced by despair. The morals of the people are corrupted,—their activity is misemployed; and all their funds, instead of being employed for the benefit of society, are applied to augment its distress. It therefore deserves the serious consideration of the legislature,

ture, to determine whether the benefits that the nation reaps from these restraints of commerce are sufficient to counterbalance the mischievous consequences they produce; or whether every purpose they want to accomplish, might not be better effected by moderate duties, which would of necessity be always paid, than by immoderate ones, which make the prohibited goods find their way into the country by stealth, in much greater quantities than ever could come by the way of a fair and open trade. Many men of great judgment have been of the latter opinion, to which I myself am disposed to incline.—But I shall not here enter more deeply into that discussion.

THESE, my dear Sir, are the chief causes that have hitherto retarded the improvement of Scotland.—These are the causes, that occasioned the misery and discontent among the lower classes of people, which gave rise to the numerous emigrations about which you was so anxious to be informed; and these will be the causes of future miseries and discontents, that may break forth, perhaps, in some way of which we have at present no clear idea, unless care is taken in time to remove them.

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I HAVE chosen to go to the root of these evils, rather than to dwell upon trivial topical inconveniencies, which, although interesting to a few individuals at a particular time, are not deserving the general attention at all periods. — I have spoken with freedom of all parties concerned, and with asperity of none. — I consider the happiness, the stability of the state, to rest upon the welfare of every individual in it; — and there is not one individual in the nation whose prosperity I would not wish to promote as far as my influence could extend; — but neither is there one individual in the kingdom whose interest I would wish to promote to the prejudice of any other. — Happily what tends to promote the real interest of individuals, when well understood, most effectually tends to the good of the whole; and I should think that my life had not been spent entirely in vain, if I could imprint a deep and lasting impression of this great and leading fact in political disquisitions upon the mind of any one man of superior rank and influence, whose example might help to inculcate it upon the mind of others.

To counterbalance these inconveniencies, and to encourage those who may wish to promote

to promote the prosperity of Scotland, I may be allowed to observe, that she likewise enjoys some advantages that are not of a trivial nature.

THE number of safe and commodious harbours she enjoys; the vicinity to the sea of almost every part of the kingdom, with the advantages that result from thence, have been already mentioned.——In these respects no nation perhaps in the universe can be put in comparison with her.

SHE has likewise the advantage over England in being freed of poor-rates;—a burthensome tax, fraught with many growing evils, which has a natural tendency to enervate industry, to corrupt the morals of the people, and to depopulate the country.

SHE is freed of the tithe in kind;—an injudicious and oppressive tax, that slackens the hand of the labourer of the ground,—produces dissensions and heart-burnings between the pastor and his parishioners,—and gives room for collusion and frauds that are subversive of the peace of society, and the well-being of the state.

She is likewise freed of dignitaries of the church, whose ample revenues necessarily lead to negligence of office; to indecorum in conduct,—to non-residence, and pluralities: instead of which she possesses a body of clergymen, whose mediocrity of circumstances insures perpetual residence among their flock,—whose want of power prevents them from being troublesome to any man,—and who, having no other means left for acquiring respect and influence, but what they derive from a superior education, and exemplary manners, cultivate with unceasing assiduity the moral virtues, and by attending with care to the important duties of their office, secure the respect and good-will of all their parishioners. There is not perhaps in the world such a numerous body of men, so respectable on account of the moral virtues that elevate the human mind, as the clergy of Scotland:—nor is there a country where, without either superstition or hypocrisy, the clergy have such influence over the people, or have their instructions so well attended to. This circumstance helps to mitigate those evils already enumerated; and, if conjoined with that political freedom and activity that the English enjoy, could not fail to produce the most salutary effects on society, by repressing those excesses

cesses into which mankind are but too prone naturally to fall.

Is it not somewhat strange, that England, whose constitution of civil government is so much more favourable to that liberty of the subject which results from equality of power, should have adopted a system of church-government so naturally calculated for the purposes of despotism; while Scotland, whose political institutions in general favour too much of despotism, should have adopted a system of church-government, the best adapted to the nature of a free state that human wisdom has been able to invent?

I HAVE purposely avoided till this time, saying any thing about the fisheries on the coast of Scotland, about which you are so anxious to be informed; because I foresee, that till some plan is adopted to mitigate those evils that depress the lower ranks of people in Scotland, and to bestow upon them riches and activity, all attempts to reap benefits from thence must be poor and inconsiderable; and because I am sensible, that if ever these beneficent purposes shall be effected, the fishings, without almost any effort of those in power, will become

come a great and astonishing object of national wealth and industry. As this, therefore, must naturally rather follow than lead the way in the improvement of Scotland, I have hitherto kept it out of sight.—But now I shall add a few observations on this important subject.

THERE are four kinds of fisheries, that are, or might be carried on with great advantage on the coasts of Scotland, viz. first, The salmon fishing; secondly, The small white fishing, viz. haddocks, whittings, and other small fish, usually consumed by the inhabitants green;—thirdly, The great white fishing, viz. of cod, ling, tusk-fish, &c. which are salted and dried in the sun; and, fourthly, The herring fishing.

THE first of these kinds of fishing is in general very well understood in Scotland, and is carried on with so much spirit and oeconomy, as gives room to think that it admits of little improvement.

THE second, as it depends in a great measure on a ready market in the neighbourhood for the fish caught, admits of great improvement in many parts of the coast. On the north and west coasts, the sea swarms with great quantities

quantities of the finest kinds of fish, which are suffered to sport there almost unmolested, as the country is so thinly inhabited, the roads to the internal parts of it so much neglected, and the people in general so poor, as to offer but a trifling market to the fishermen. But if ever manufactures should be there established, and in consequence of that, if the roads should be helped, and money become more plenty, the fishings would keep pace with the other improvements, and would become a very important source of wealth and strength to the nation. All attempts to promote this branch of national industry in any other way, must, however, be from obvious causes impracticable.

THE fishery for dried cod, &c. has of late been pretty much attended to upon the coasts of Shetland and the Western isles, and has afforded very good returns to some adventurers from the north of Scotland, who have tried it for some years past. The fish may be caught in abundance;—but the climate is unfavourable for curing them, the country being liable to frequent rains during the summer season. Yet there is no doubt, that were the inhabitants able to afford proper stages for drying them on, as on the coasts of Newfoundland, this might become

become another very great source of wealth and vigour to the nation.

WOOD, however, in these countries is so dear, and the people are in general so poor, that it must be long, if they are left to themselves, before they can be able to obtain these conveniencies. But from the experiments that have already been made, there can be no room to doubt, that if merchants from other places would erect proper shades along the rocks, into which the fish might be easily carried at night, or when it rained, they might carry on a very gainful trade; either by purchasing the fish when fresh caught, from the native fishermen of the place; or by keeping vessels themselves for catching them; or by both,—which seems to be the most eligible plan. The women, and poor people of the country, could be hired for very moderate wages to turn them upon the rocks, and look after them. This is an obvious source of wealth, which could only have been so long unattended to, from the general want of stock among the adventurers of this country.

In the mean time, as the inhabitants themselves are assiduous in improving the advantages

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ges they possess as far as their slender means will admit of, they ought to be freed from every possible discouragement. Whether the complaints in the Appendix, N^o. II. III. and IV. are well founded or not, I cannot take upon me to say; but they are of such a nature as to deserve to be enquired into by those in power.—*I will not wound the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*, was the beneficent speech of the most tender benefactor of mankind. The first dawnings of industry ought on no account to receive the slightest check. Severe regulations, however well meant, are perhaps in almost all cases hurtful to manufactures and national industry; but they are, without any doubt, *always* pernicious in the infancy of any art.—On these occasions men, with a trembling dread, are induced to advance at all, and ought to be suffered to probe their way with perfect freedom. If some should accidentally go wrong, their own interest will soon bring them right again. It is only after a manufacture is entirely established, and after the most proper plan of prosecuting it with the greatest oeconomy has been *fully* ascertained, and well understood, that regulations, approved of by the most sensible persons engaged in the business, may with safety be adopted. And even then, a judicious

man will chuse to make but few regulations, and be careful that these few are not liable to be abused by those who are entrusted with the power of enforcing them. It is in general safer to entrust a man with the management of his own affairs, than to subject him to the controul of another, who is not so nearly interested in the success of the undertaking. Nothing, therefore, relating to these regulations, ought to be discretionary. The rules ought to be clear, and accurately defined, so as that any man of ordinary understanding can know with perfect certainty on every occasion, whether he has transgressed the regulations or not. In every case where the nature of the thing does not admit of this precision, the liberty of the subject absolutely requires that there should be no restraint.

Those who think that trade may be regulated, like a watch, by their decrees; and who are persuaded, that all would run into confusion were their hand to be slackened for a moment, will no doubt condemn these principles.—But such as have attended to the nature of man, and the circumstances which regulate his actions, will not be disposed to doubt the axiom.—These *regulating* politicians, if I may

may venture a new phrase,—put me in mind of a man who was crossing a ferry in a windy day, when the boat heeled very much to one side, so as to make him afraid it would be immediately overset. To prevent this dreadful misfortune, he put his shoulder to the boat, and pressed with all his might, and called to others to assist him:—but when the sailors laughed at him for his folly, he was at length so much enraged at them, that he withdrew in a huff, —saying, *Well, well, let her go to the bottom, and see if you will laugh then*; firmly convinced that the vessel would be immediately overset.—But to his great astonishment it went on without the smallest variation. It were well if the great efforts of our never-ceasing guardians in commercial affairs were always equally inoffensive.

BUT although these fishings are of great importance, and would be considered as very great national benefits by any other people, they are so inconsiderable in comparison of what the herring-fishery might be upon the shores of Scotland and its isles, were it properly attended to, as to make them be in a great measure overlooked by political writers on this subject; who dwell with just admirati-

on on the benefits that might be derived from the herring-fishery, and expresses the greatest astonishment that it should have been so long neglected by the Scots themselves in particular, and by the British nation in general. To me, however, this occasions no degree of astonishment at all; as the neglect of it by the Scots may be easily accounted for from the circumstances that have been already explained, and the little success that has hitherto attended the efforts of others in that line may be as easily accounted for.

So long as the inhabitants of Scotland and the isles are in general poor, dependent, and dispirited, it is in vain to hope that ever *they* can be induced to engage heartily in any great undertaking, however obvious the advantages may be that could be derived from it. But let any plan be adopted that shall alter their circumstances in these respects, and it would be then impossible to prevent them from engaging in this very advantageous fishery, and of pushing it to its greatest degree of perfection; and when this shall come to be the case, Scotland and the isles, instead of being in some measure a useless appendage of the British crown, will become of as great importance both as to revenue

que and defence, as any other part of the British dominions; and be the envy of all surrounding nations. But till some plan is adopted for accomplishing the *first* purpose, every attempt that shall be made to effect the *last*, must prove nearly of as little significance as those that have been already adopted.

THE great point wanted to give stability to the British herring-fishery, is to diminish the expence incurred by those who engage in it. — For till that shall be accomplished so far as to bring the British herrings cheaper to a foreign market than those of Holland can be afforded, the business must be carried on in a languid manner, that can be attended with little benefit to the nation. But this expence can only be diminished by the frugality and industry of the persons actually engaged in the fishery; which can be accomplished in no other way, than by giving to those individuals engaged in it the certainty of reaping for themselves, and not earning for another, the whole profits that shall be derived from that industry and frugality. *No labour that is carried on by slaves, can ever be done at so little expence as by freemen. — Nothing that is performed by hirelings, can ever be performed so cheap as by*
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men who are working immediately for their own behoof.

THIS fundamental axiom in politics, the justness of which is confirmed by the experience of all nations, ancient and modern, seems to have been entirely overlooked by our legislators in their attempts to establish the herring-fishery; in consequence of which their efforts, after thirty years experience, have been found to have produced hardly any beneficial effect. — And by adhering to this political axiom with invariable steadiness, the Dutch, who have many natural impediments to surmount that we have not, do still continue to carry on a successful fishery upon our very coast, and undersell us in foreign markets by the fish caught sometimes by our own people, even in our own harbours.

THE laws that have been at different times enacted in Great Britain with regard to this grand fishery, seem to have been framed directly in opposition to this axiom. And I have no hesitation in saying, that a Dutchman who should read these laws, would be perfectly satisfied, that if they were entitled, acts for *discouraging*, instead of *encouraging*, the herring-fishery,

fishery, the title would correspond much more perfectly with the laws themselves than it does in its present form *.—He would say, that to encourage

* By the 23d George II. cap. 24. a society was instituted, for twenty-one years, at London, under the name of *The Society of the free British Fishery*, who were impowered to raise and to employ in the British herring and white cod fishery, any sum not exceeding 500,000*l.*; for which sum, or whatever part of it they could show was actually applied for that purpose, they were to receive each year 3*l.* per cent. for fourteen years; and were besides to receive 30*s.* per ton *per annum* for every vessel employed in that fishing, on the following conditions, viz.

Every vessel intitled to the bounty, was to be a decked vessel built in Great Britain, *after the act commenced*, on purpose for the herring-fishery, and nothing else,—to be employed for no other purpose whatever.

Such vessel shall proceed each year from some port of Great Britain, (this to be attested by customhouse-officers, and) “ so as to be at *Brassay Sound in Shetland* at the general rendezvous, on the *11th day of June*, and shall continue following and fishing among the shoals of herring as they move southward to the *1st day of October*; or shall proceed to *Campbell-town in Argyleshire*, and be at the rendezvous there, on or before the *1st day of September*, and shall continue fishing among the shoals of herring as they move, to the *31st day of December*, unless they shall have sooner compleated their loading.”

Every such vessel shall, moreover, before she can be entitled to the bounty, “ have on board twelve Winchester bushels of salt for every ton such vessel is capable of holding, which salt shall be barreled up in new barrels, and as many more new barrels, as such bus or vessel is capable of carrying.”

And

encourage the herring-fishery effectually, the British legislature ought to have aimed at diminishing the expence of that fishing to the several

And every such vessel " of seventy tons burden, shall have on board, or belonging to her, two fleets of nets, every fleet to consist of fifty nets, each net to be thirty yards full upon the rope, and seven fathom deep; and so in proportion for vessels of a greater or lesser tonnage."

And every such vessel " of twenty tons burden, shall have on board, at the place of rendezvous, not less than six men; and every vessel of greater burden, shall have over and above these six men, one man more for every five tons she shall exceed twenty tons."

But notwithstanding this encouragement, it was found in a few years, (as might have been easily foreseen at the beginning), that the society could not carry on their business without loss; and upon their petition, the parliament augmented the bounty from 30s. to 50s. per ton, and left them at liberty as to the dimensions of their nets, " provided that every vessel contained a quantity of netting upon the whole equal to what is required in the above act."

But all this would not do. The affairs of the company fell from bad to worse, till at length it was entirely depressed; and after various alterations of the law as to this particular, of little moment, it was settled by the 11th George III. cap. 31. (which is still in force), on the following terms.

A bounty of 30s. per ton is allowed to every vessel from 20 to 80 tons burden, that shall be employed in the British herring-fishery,—provided as follows.

That such vessel be a decked vessel, built in Britain, after the 1st day of January 1760.

Such vessels " shall proceed directly upon the said fishery from that part of the united kingdom to which such vessel shall belong, and where the owners reside; and that the

several undertakers as much as was in their power:—instead of which they have endeavoured all they could to encrease it, by loading

the owners of such bufs or vessel shall take out their licence from the collector and comptroller of the port where such bufs or vessel was *bona fide* manned, victualled, furnished and accoutred for the voyage."

It is hard to guess what was meant to be the benefit reaped by these restrictions. It seems to be a matter of little consequence to the nation, whether a vessel shall sail directly from that port where the owner resides, or from any other port of Britain;—but it may be a great loss to the owner of a vessel, to bring her perhaps from a distant port to his own on some occasions.

Every vessel to contain the same proportion of hands as formerly; "and shall have on board at the place of rendezvous 250 square yards of netting for every ton of bufs-measurement, *together with the customary quantity of other materials for the equipment and mounting of the said 250 yards of netting in the fishery business*: but with liberty to make use of such nets in the same as shall be best adapted to the said fisheries."

All restrictions are perhaps hurtful; but surely nothing in any law of this sort should be left indefinite, and therefore liable to different interpretations according to the humour of every petty officer; which must be a source of much vexation. — The clause in *Italics* is liable to this objection.—It is besides absurd; because the difference in the form or size of nets which they are at liberty to employ by this act, may make a variation in the *customary quantity of other materials* necessary.

The places of rendezvous are by this act declared to be *Yarmouth* in the county of *Norfolk*, *Whitehaven* in the county of *Cumberland*, *Leith* in the shire of *Edinburgh*, *Inverness* in *Invernessshire*, *Brassay Sound* in *Shetland*,
Campbell-town

ing the several undertakers with an unnecessary apparatus of nets and instruments, that they can hardly ever have occasion to employ. He would say,—that if they had really aimed at diminishing this expence, instead of confining the premium to those only who were rich, and capable of forming great equipments; by which circumstance the poor, who must of necessity be the operators in that great work, are

Campbell-town or Oban in *Argyleshire*, and *Kirkwall* in *Orkney*. The vessels to be at one or other of these places of rendezvous “on or before the *twenty-second day of June* each year, to continue fishing till the *twelfth of October*;—or shall be at one or the other of these places on or before the *first day of October*, and continue fishing till the *eleventh of January* following.”

Whether the great latitude given by this act for the place of rendezvous, especially for the first fishing-season, will be beneficial or not, is perhaps a little doubtful. The herrings begin to appear first upon the coasts of *Shetland* in the month of *June*, and advance slowly southward, so as to reach *Yarmouth* in any considerable quantities about the end of *September*, or beginning of *October*; and are rather less forward in advancing upon the west coast.—It appears, therefore, to have been a judicious regulation in the first act the making *Brassey sound* in *Shetland* the place of general rendezvous in *June*. Perhaps this might have been with propriety also extended to *Kirkwall* in *Orkney*; but it hardly appears reasonable to extend it to any place farther southward before the month of *September*. It might require a fortnight to sail from *Yarmouth*, *Leith*, or *Liverpool*, in the month of *June*, before they could reach the place where a single herring is to be seen.

effectually

effectually deprived of any immediate benefit from thence; they would have devised some method of bestowing a premium that should have extended its influence to the meanest individual, in proportion to his industry.—He would say, that if the success of the fishery had been the principal object aimed at, rather than the enriching some powerful undertakers, the premium ought not to have been so considerable as to indemnify these for almost their whole adventure, without any industry on their part, and to extend equally to the idle as the industrious; but should have been in itself more moderate, and so contrived as to encrease with the industry and skill of the respective undertakers. In short, he would say, that if the English had been jealous lest the Scots might at some time or other engage in the herring-fishing themselves, and from their natural advantages be enabled to outrival the Dutch in this branch of commerce, which they wished to prevent; and had they been afraid to avow this design openly, but resolved to effect it by an underhand round-about way, they could not have fallen upon a plan more effectually to have done this than that which they have adopted; because it effectually excludes the natives from reaping any benefit directly

directly from the premium, who were the only persons that, from local situation, and other circumstances, could carry on that fishing cheaper than any others;—and because it puts it out of the power of enterprising individuals from diminishing their expence of tackle and equipments, and from supplying that deficiency by ingenuity and industry, seeing they must have these, whether they use them or not.

THE consequence of these laws has been nearly in fact what might have been expected from the foregoing reasons. In hopes of obtaining the bounty, many vessels are annually fitted out by rich individuals in England or elsewhere, which meet at the general rendezvous at the proper season, and make a great figure annually in a news-paper. These are commanded by men in general, who have no other interest in the adventure, than to draw their pay for the time; and are navigated by persons who know no more about fishing, than I do about directing the manœuvres of an army; and who are usually engaged at as low a rate as possible, being wanted merely to make a show at the general rendezvous.—The preservation of the nets, and other expensive articles

articles of equipment, in order that they may make their appearance at the next annual rendezvous, is the principal care of the master, who accomplishes his end most effectually, by locking them up, and hardly suffering them to be wetted; and while they remain on the station, which they are obliged to do for a certain time to intitle them to the premium, instead of applying themselves with assiduity to catching of fish, like skilful fishermen, they parade about like wanton idlers,—break and disperse the shoals of fish wherever they meet them; and, not content with this in the open sea, even enter into the creeks and bays, where small boats only could fish with propriety, and in which the natives, even without any aid from the bounty, would, if uninterrupted, make a reasonable profit to themselves. Thus these premium-vessels produce as much mischief as they can wherever they go, to the great annoyance of the industrious fishermen, who are from this cause obliged in some measure to desert an employment that they would naturally follow with profit, if freed from this intolerable nuisance.

You, who have no access to know of these matters, but from the reports now and then in
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the news-papers, will be surpris'd at this account; but as you must sometimes have an opportunity of meeting with men who are natives of the West Highlands or isles, who are sometimes upon the spot, so as to know the truth, and they will satisfy you, upon enquiry, that there is no exaggeration in the above account. But there is some reason to hope, that this species of idle industry will not long be continued: for, in consequence of the bounty, such numbers of ships are fitted out, as puts it out of the power of the commissioners of the customs to pay the premiums punctually; which occasions some little embarrassment to these idle adventurers*: and as this is attended with a very heavy expence to the nation, without producing any beneficial consequences, it is to be hoped that the matter will come under the consideration of parliament ere long:—and it is to be wished that the gentlemen and inhabitants of these countries, would, like other free subjects of the realm, petition parliament for relief in this respect, and be at pains to authenticate such facts as might lead the legislature

* By the last act, it is provided, that these premiums shall bear interest at 3l. per cent. till paid, from the time they fall due.

to form a right judgment with regard to this matter.

WHEN this subject shall come to be debated in that august assembly, I make no doubt but some men of judgment and discretion will be able to suggest some proper plan for the future, that shall be liable to fewer objections than any thing that I could propose.—In the mean time I may be allowed to suggest, that a small bounty upon every barrel of herrings properly cured,—in the same manner as is given for salmon, would promise to produce a much more beneficial effect than the present method of bestowing the premium: for in that case every man who was able to bear a share in fitting out the smallest boat, could be benefited by it, and would likewise have a chance to be rewarded according to the degree of his skill and industry; the hope of which reward would stimulate him to exert himself to the utmost of his power on all occasions.

AND if, as an encouragement to the fitting out larger vessels, a moderate premium should be allowed for every vessel at so much per ton above a certain bulk, fitted out for that purpose, and remaining on that station for a certain

tain time employed in the herring fishery, without limiting them as to nets, &c. I can see no harm that would result from it ;—these vessels being ordered to keep in the sea, and not to fish in the lochs and bays, which may be better fished by small craft.

If such were the law, there is no doubt but the natives on the coast would at once engage in it with all the eagerness that their circumstances would admit of. And in that case there is no room to fear, but that the money gained by lucky adventurers would be wholly applied to the augmenting their boats, and improving their tackle; which, together with the superior skill they would annually gain by experience, would augment their profits more and more :—and consequently make them more eager to prosecute the business, and extend their trade; till at length, becoming jealous of the Dutch, they would render *their* fishing near our own coasts incommodious. They would refuse them those little supplies and accommodations on shore, which at present enables them to diminish considerably the expence of their equipments.—These circumstances would raise the expence of herrings to the Dutch, while the prices to
our

our own people would be gradually diminishing, as their skill and abilities encreased. Thus in a short time would we be able to drive the Dutch out of every market, even without the assistance of the debenture; which might be gradually diminished, as the circumstances of the case would admit of, till at length it should be wholly withdrawn.

SUCH is the natural progress of improvement when the bars that prevent these improvements from taking place are discovered and removed. When a man has power to avail himself of natural advantages, his own interest will prompt him to pursue it with an inconceivable degree of alacrity, as soon as he is certain that the benefits he derives from thence will be employed for his own emolument. And we may be always certain, that wherever we meet with a people who neglect to improve some obvious advantage that their situation affords them, they are prevented from doing it by some secret influence that operates most powerfully, though unseen; which we ought to exert ourselves to discover, instead of blaming the people for obstinacy or stupidity,—or trying to *drive* them forward by compulsory laws, and restrictive ordinances.

If such a plan of legislation should ever be adopted, its salutary influences would be greatly accelerated if the efforts of the fishermen were supported by that of merchants, who should come to purchase the fish upon the spot, and cure them for their own behoof; which would form a lucrative branch of trade, that would soon allure competitors in it *, to the great benefit of the nation.

We seem to have hitherto formed a wrong idea of the most profitable method of carrying on this grand national fishery, by adhering too strictly to maxims drawn from the practice of the Dutch;—not sufficiently advert- ing to the difference that is between them and us, merely on account of local situation. On this account alone, some particulars in their œconomy may be absolutely necessary to them, which would not only be superfluous for us, but highly destructive.

THE Dutchman, by being obliged to make a tolerable voyage before he reaches the scene

* I am informed that a plan of this sort is already adopt- ed on the West coast of Rosshire, where a company of merchants from Liverpool have established a manufacture of red-herrings, and have contracted to buy all the herrings the natives catch on that coast, at a certain stipulated price.

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of action, and who, when there, is at a distance from his own coast, is under an absolute necessity of carrying casks and salt, and a number of hands, on board every vessel, not only for catching the fish, but also for salting and curing them upon the spot.—He must also have pretty large vessels to enable him to remain a considerable time upon his station, so as not to be obliged to leave the shoal too soon, and thus lose the advantage of a herring-fishery. All these particulars seem to have been considered as necessary to the success of our herring-fishery by the legislature in framing the preceding acts :—yet nothing is more certain, than that when the fish come into the very bays and havens of our country, large vessels are altogether unnecessary, and therefore an incumbrance. And where the boats can come on shore in the morning *, as easily as they could retire to the vessel to which they belonged,—it is not necessary either to carry casks or salt to sea,—or people for curing them ; all of which offices can be better and more frugally performed on shore by women, who would be busied at that work while the men refreshed themselves,

* The herrings are always caught during the night.

where stores of casks and salt might always be kept in readiness to supply the fishermen as they should be wanted.

Nor would this method of fishing tend to supersede the use, or interrupt the trade of the *vent yaggers*, as they are called by the Dutch. These *vent yaggers* are a small light kind of vessels, built on purpose for sailing quickly, and act as tenders among the fishing-vessels at the beginning of the season, to carry the first caught fish as early to market as possible, when they always sell at a great price. If vessels of this sort were fitted out by private adventurers, they might as conveniently buy the fish as soon as caught by cruising along the British coast, and among the fishing-vessels, as they can do among the Dutch busses. For, as these adventurers could always afford to give a much higher price to the fishermen than they could afterwards draw for them, they would be very ready to hang out signals agreed upon, denoting the quantity of herrings they had on hand at every place at any one time, and be ready to put off their boats with them where necessary, by a signal from the *yagget*; so that by cruising within sight of the coast, all the caught fish could be picked up with the utmost facility.

A PRACTICE

A PRACTICE somewhat similar to this prevails with regard to the commerce of salmon on the coast of Scotland. In the beginning of the fishing-season, this kind of fish gives a great price in London, so that the fish-mongers there employ a kind of swift-sailing vessels called *smacks*, to bring them as quickly to market as possible. The salmon intended for that market are boiled, and packed in small kitts, as soon as taken; and the smacks succeed one another, running from north to south along the coast, and taking up on their passage all the boiled fish that are ready; and with these proceed directly for London,—— where they are sold to very good account.

If then it should become a business for merchants to buy the fish when fresh caught from the fishermen, and to cure them on shore, and lay them up in stores for exportation, or any other use,—— the fishermen would be necessarily freed of all the expence that would be required in providing casks and salt,—— nor would be obliged to learn the nicer operation of curing them:——from which circumstances they would be at liberty to exert themselves to the utmost of their power in their own calling, without taking any concern about other matters,

ters, which does not so naturally belong to their business.—Thus each party would move in his own sphere with pleasure and profit, and mutually contribute to the good of the whole.

ANOTHER circumstance that might tend to advance the British herring-fishery, would be the discovery of some new and more elegant way of curing them than any that are practised at present. It is reported, that the present method of curing herrings in Holland was discovered about the year 1397 by one *William Buckelz*, or *Buchelen*, a native of *Bier Uliet*, whose name became so famous on that account, and his memory so much revered by his countrymen, that the Emperor Charles V. wanting to conciliate the good-will of his *Flemish* subjects, could not think of a more popular piece of condescension, than by making a journey in person to the isle of *Bier Uliet* to pay a visit to the tomb of this public benefactor to the country. It is now near four hundred years since that discovery was made, yet there is no reason to think that it has been in the smallest degree improved since that time, although there is little room to doubt, but

but that as great improvement might be made in this as in any other useful art.

It seems indeed a little extraordinary, that a country which depends so much upon its naval strength as Great Britain, and whose sailors therefore ought to have claimed a principal share of her concern,—should have made so few improvements in the important art of preserving viands for a long time sweet and wholesome. Our philosophers have made great discoveries as to the *antiseptic* power, and medical qualities, of various substances that might be employed, either alone, or mixed with others, for preserving food, without giving it that fiery scorbutic quality which it derives from common salt. Yet the practice of curing almost all kinds of flesh, and of every sort of fish that I know, except pickled salmon, with common salt alone, continues to be very universally followed. Herrings in particular are so overpowered with salt, as to become almost unfit for general use; and therefore are assigned as food to the very lowest kind of people, and sold on that account at a very low rate.—In the present mode of curing them, I know of no market to which they are peculiarly adapted, save to that of the

the West Indies, where they are purchased for the negroes; — who, poor creatures, being allowed no other kind of salt, prize them chiefly on this account; employing them and their brine as a delicious seasoning to the other parts of their food. Ye who gorge on turtle and high-seasoned venison, — how can you bear the thoughts of seeing such a number of your fellow-creatures condemned to feed upon such nauseous fare, that they may minister to your luxurious desires!

YET of all the fish that are drawn from the sea, the herring, in its original perfection, is perhaps the most delicious. And if cured by the help of less acrid antiseptics, which should not overpower its own native flavour, it might become a most agreeable delicacy, and as such be sought after through all the world: — on which accounts, a few thousand pounds offered as a premium by parliament, to be given to the person who should discover the most elegant preparation of this fish, which could be obtained at a moderate expence, — might be attended with the most beneficial effects to the community; — the premium to be determined by a jury of London aldermen, who should try the different parcels that
should

should compete for it, after they had been returned from the West Indies ; — each competitor to be at liberty to suggest what he thought the most elegant way of dressing the fish cured his own way ; and the jury to be at liberty to cause their own cooks to dress every sort in as great a variety of ways as they should incline. This might have somewhat the appearance of a ludicrous trial ; — but if it were attended with as great benefits to this nation, as the discovery of Buchelen has been of to the Dutch, we might well submit to be laughed at by all Europe, so that we might be allowed to reap the profits from it *.

I SHALL finish these observations with a few remarks on the whale-fishing, which lies more

* This is a matter of more serious concern than some may be disposed to think it at first, and therefore deserves to be attended to.—A very trifling circumstance often makes the manufactures of one country shift to another ; and when they have once changed places, it is no easy matter to bring them back again.—Sweden and Scotland long ago derived more benefit from the herring-fishery than any other nations ; — but by the discovery that the Dutch made of a more agreeable way of curing them than was formerly known, their fish came to be preferred in every market ; which enabled them to get the sole possession of that fishery, that has proved to them indeed a valuable gold-mine for several centuries. A like discovery by Britain at present, would effectually put her in possession of the fishery, which she might easily retain perhaps as long as she should continue a nation.

conveniently

conveniently for the Scots adventurers than any others of Britain, and which has there been several times attempted with as little success as in other parts of the island. That this want of success in the British adventurers to the northern seas, must be owing to some defect in the manner of conducting the operations in Britain, cannot admit of a doubt,—seeing the Dutch are able to carry on a successful fishing in the Greenland seas without any national encouragement, while those in Britain find it a losing trade, although they receive such a bounty, as is alone nearly sufficient to pay the whole expence of the enterprise, if it were judiciously conducted. — Any attempt, therefore, to discover the causes that have counteracted the influence of this bounty, merits the attention of all well-wishers of the nation.

It is an observation that must have occurred to you before this time, that few undertakings have been much forwarded by high bounties.—Those of the herring and whale fisheries are striking proofs of this.—But that it is not the bounties themselves that occasion this retardment, but some injudicious arrangement that takes place in consequence of these

these bounties, will hardly be disputed.— No one will deny, but that a bounty of so much per ton upon every ship fitted out for the Greenland fishery in Holland, would rather encrease than diminish their profits on that fishing :—we must therefore enquire how it comes to produce this effect in Britain.

THE first circumstance that here presents itself, is, that before the British parliament resolves to grant a high bounty for encouraging any new branch of commerce, the attention of the nation has, in some way or other, been strongly turned towards it.—Great are the national benefits that are expected to accrue from it: and the imagination of the multitude is buoyed up to the highest pitch with the hopes of private advantage that will result to individuals by engaging in it.—Hence innumerable societies start up in every corner, the members of which subscribe certain sums to be uplifted from each, and applied as a joint fund for prosecuting the undertaking.

In this manner numerous societies of merchants are formed by persons who know nothing about merchandise; and the management of the funds of this many-headed body is usually intrusted to some person who understands

stands his own interest better than the greatest part of the members, and who acts in such a way as to forward that interest without the possibility of incurring any blame from those who are no competent judges when things are well or ill managed, so as that they have but a fair and plausible appearance.

WHILE the generality of the persons who enter themselves as members of such societies, are men of fortune, who venture only a small part of their stock, about the success of which they are not materially interested;—a few, knowing how things of that sort are usually managed, subscribe from other motives, and usually know very well before they do so, in what manner they may make the loss of their small share turn out to their own profit. One man is perhaps himself, or has a near friend, in whose success he is involved, — a baker, — another is a brewer,—a third a smith,—a fourth a carpenter,—a fifth a ropemaker,—and so on; —when contracts come to be made for the company, the business usually comes in the way of those who have most friends in the direction at the time.—Hence all articles, instead of being bought the best cheap, are usually furnished at a very advanced price,—and of the very

very worst quality.—One man winks at one particular, in order that another may wink at another ; so that the funds of the society are squandered away with an extravagant profusion, which the profits of the most gainful trade would not be sufficient to replace ; and at the same time, from collusion, and other practices of that kind, accounts are made out so plausible, as to afford no room for a man who only spends an hour or two upon them in a year, to be able to perceive the smallest deficiency.

I do not say that these things have always happened, but I say that this is what may be naturally expected to take place in these circumstances, according to the common run of human affairs. And this may in part account for the failure of those great national undertakings, which, according to the common proverb, by becoming too general, *What is the business of every body, is neglected, as being the business of nobody* ; so that no good need be expected to accrue from them.

BUT to come to the whale-fishing business in particular ; The legislature here, as in most cases, by forming in their own mind an idea of the many benefits that would result to the individual

dividual undertakers, as well as the community at large, from employing large vessels in that trade, originally confined their premiums to those only of great burden *,—from which regulation has resulted many very uneconomical drawbacks. For,

In the first place, as adventurers who were wholly unacquainted with the nature of the Greenland trade, adopted the idea from the legislature, that large vessels were absolutely necessary for it; and as they foresaw that the expence of equipping and navigating a very large vessel would not be so great in proportion to her tonnage, as that of one of a smaller size, while the bounty could be claimed in proportion to the tonnage, it became a fundamental axiom among them, that the larger their vessels were, the greater would be their profits. They were therefore in all cases built as large as circumstances would admit of. But these vessels, by being too large for being commodiously employed in the common coasting-trade of the country, were obliged to be laid up for three fourths of the year, as a dead and decaying stock to the society.

* viz. To vessels of 200 tons burden or upwards.

In the second place, by drawing too much water for many of the harbours to which they belonged, they could neither get out nor in to these but at the highest spring-tides; and if the wind proved unfavourable at that time, they were even then unable to get out; from which circumstance several vessels have lost their voyage, to the great loss of the company: and if they returned at an improper time, by being obliged to lie upon the coast till a spring-tide came, they were in danger of receiving damage if the wind shifted to an improper point; from which circumstance several of them have been driven on shore and wrecked, to the still greater detriment of the undertakers.

And, in the third place, these large vessels, even when they get to their place of destination among the ice, are in every respect worse fitted for carrying on the fishing to advantage, than a greater number of smaller ones, that might be fitted out at the same expence; as a little attention to the subject will, I hope, soon satisfy you.

In the Greenland seas, ships are very apt to be becalmed; in which case a large vessel is so unwickly, as to be in danger of being carried away

away with a current, in spite of the feeble efforts of the boats to prevent it; whereas a small vessel is easier worked, or towed from danger by the boats, or staved off from the ice, in cases of necessity.—A large vessel, therefore, dares not venture so near the ice as one of more moderate burden, properly built, and judiciously rigged.

It is likewise observed by those who have been oftneft in these seas, that whales are usually found in companies, in some manner, inso-much that one vessel which shall happen to be luckily stationed, shall see many more fish than she can possibly manage; while another, at no great distance, shall not perhaps see one during the whole voyage. The greater the number of vessels, therefore, the greater number of chances they will have to fall in with the whales; and if they act in concert, so as to be regulated by certain signals, one ship of the company falling in with a proper station, may direct the whole fleet, so as to be benefited by her lucky chance. Any one who weighs the advantages that would accrue to the adventurers from this circumstance in a course of years, will be satisfied, that an inattention to this alone might sufficiently account for the little success the British whale-fishers have in general had. The Dutch, and especially

especially the New-England fishers, the most expert and dextrous at present on the globe, are so sensible of the advantages that are derived from this circumstance, that although particular persons will sometimes fit out only one moderate-sized ship as their whole venture, yet I am told they never sail alone, but associate themselves with some others, equally independent as themselves, with whom they sail in squadrons, greater or smaller, as particular circumstances occasion, agreeing among themselves as to signals, and other particulars that may occasion disputes.

For these reasons it would seem that our legislature, by confining their bounty to ships only of a very great burden, have directed the whale-fishing into an improper channel, which must have greatly diminished the profits of the several adventurers.

This error seems to have been at length discovered, and is in some measure corrected by the statute 15th George III. cap. 31. which extends the bounty to vessels under two hundred tons burden, and grants a bounty for no more than four hundred tons for any one vessel, of whatever size above that she may be. This

judicious alteration will no doubt be in time attended with beneficial consequences.

THE profits of the adventurers in the whale-fishery have, likewise, no doubt, been greatly diminished by the little, or rather no interest, that the captains of the ships, and mariners employed, have in the adventure. For as these are usually engaged for the voyage, and are paid a certain stipulated sum as wages, which is the same whether the voyage has been successful or the reverse, it may be expected that they will give themselves little trouble in discovering the easiest and most effectual means of promoting the interest of their employers: and as it often happens that a captain is appointed by the particular interest of some of the members of the company, rather than because of his own merit, it may often happen also, that he is neither very well qualified for the voyage, nor acquainted with the crew he is to command; some of whom, by being long employed in that trade, may be more knowing than himself, and whom he treats in a haughty manner; from which circumstance variances arise between them, and every one is rather desirous to retard than to promote the success

cess of the fishery, hoping that the blame may be thrown upon the opposite party. Thus are the society presented with jarring memorials and mutual complaints, in lieu of the money that ought to fill their coffers *. In these circumstances, what man of common sense can ever hope to see any mercantile enterprise carried on with success.

It is perhaps doubtful, if, after the many unsuccessful attempts that have been made to carry on the whale-fishery by *joint company stocks*, private adventurers would be easily prevailed with to venture on the undertaking, even if the legislature should adopt a better method of encouraging them;—yet if ever the nation should become rich and flourishing, in consequence of the general security of the subject, the encouragement of agriculture and manufactures, and the other means above recommended; as the capital stock of the people encreased, it would force adventurers to devise means of employing that stock to the greatest advantage; in which circumstances it would hard-

* I have had particular occasion to see this realized on several occasions.

ly be possible to prevent those of Scotland from engaging in the whale-fishing with spirit and success. To assist them in their first enterprises, the following particulars are all that seem to be necessary to be attended to.

LET government continue the same bounty on British-built ships employed in the Greenland fishery, as at present per ton *, without any limitation of burden, to be paid to every vessel which sails to the Greenland seas at the proper season, goes to the station, and returns in a proper time; without any other conditions, excepting that the said vessel, from the time of her sailing till she return, shall have been in no harbour, unless put in to it by stress of weather, or to refit, or buy necessaries, where she is to remain no longer than absolutely necessary, and to take on board no goods whatever, nor pursue any

* By the last quoted law, which is still in force, the bounty before Christmas 1776 was 40s. per ton.—From Christmas 1776 to 1781, it is 30s. per ton; and from 1781 to 1786, when the act expires, it is only 20s. per ton. I can perceive no good reason for diminishing the bounty so suddenly, before it is known whether or not it will produce the desired effect.

other design or view of profit;—these circumstances to be verified by the oath of the master, and any part of the ship's company, if thought necessary *;—but if it shall be discovered

* In all the laws hitherto enacted in Britain for granting a bounty on vessels employed in any kind of fishings, the legislature seems to have been extremely solicitous to prevent any person from claiming the bounty, unless they were provided with every thing that could be thought necessary for carrying on these fisheries in every possible situation of things; and hence they have been at great pains to prescribe the number of nets, lines, salt, casks, men, provisions, &c. to be on board of every such vessel before it could be entitled to the bounty; and also to regulate the ports from which they are to sail, and many other particulars, which seem quite unnecessary, as they only operate like so many clogs to retard the business they seem evidently intended to encourage, and to enhance the price of the articles that they ought to diminish.

The design of a bounty in all cases of this sort ought to be to encourage inexperienced adventurers to engage in a particular branch of business with which they are unacquainted; but which it is supposed might be carried on without the bounty, with profit, as soon as it came to be fully understood, and the business conducted with œconomy.

If that bounty, therefore, is not so high as to be alone sufficient to defray the expence of the equipment, and thus to tempt a man to fit out a vessel merely with a view to obtain the bounty, without attending at all to the business, there seems to be no reason to fear that any person would send a vessel a voyage of this sort, without an apparatus proper for the purpose; as they must otherwise inevitably be losers by the business, and therefore quickly give it over; so that in this case there would be no necessity for prescribing particular rules for their conduct.

And

covered by any means afterwards, that the master shall have given a false report, the penalty to be forfeiture of the ship and bounty, with treble the value of that bounty; to be recovered first from the ship-master, and failing him, from the owners of the vessel;—

And if an adventurer finds that he cannot be fully indemnified by the bounty, and therefore must exert himself when in the proper station for fishing, he will find, that his profits will be so much diminished, if he wants a proper apparatus, as to be obliged of his own accord either to provide a proper apparatus, or give over the business.

But if he is left at liberty to chuse for himself, he will always make choice of that apparatus that will effect the purpose required at the *smallest possible* expence.—Ingenuity well be exerted to discover new methods of saving money; as every such contrivance will augment his profits; by which means the undertakers will in time be able to catch the fish at as small an expence as any other nation, and by consequence will afford them as cheap at foreign markets as any others can do. This surely is, or ought to be, the aim of every bounty whatever.

For these reasons, it appears to me a self-evident truth, that it is altogether superfluous in the legislature to express such anxiety, lest their bounty should be bestowed on undeserving persons; as all the conditions invented to prevent this, only tend to retard the improvement of the fishery, which might be more perfectly effected by moderating the bounty, where it is too high, a small degree.

The only circumstances that seem to be reasonably exigible are, that the vessels be British built, and that they remain a proper time upon the station: all other particulars might perhaps, with safety, be left to the choice of the persons concerned.

the

the master in such cases to be imprisoned till these damages shall be recovered, without a possibility of obtaining his liberty, and to be ever afterwards liable to the owners in the whole sums forfeited by them, unless he acted by their orders. It is reasonable, that where the conditions may be so easily complied with, the national bounty should not be misapplied; and therefore such high penalties ought to be exacted.—For the security of owners, who might thus be ruined without any blame on their part, by the duplicity or malevolence of the master, it is highly necessary that he should in all cases be involved in their ruin. The last clause would effectually prevent frauds on that head.

WERE such a law as this to be enacted, private persons, owners of ships, in times of dead trade, when little profit could be made of their vessels otherwise, would naturally turn their attention towards the Greenland fishery. They would find, that they could, almost without any expence, make a voyage to these seas; as the bounty would indemnify them for almost the whole of that: and if any of those should prove successful, which could hardly fail to be the case where the master was part-owner
of

of the vessel, it would encourage others to try their fortune in the same way, when they were in the least at a loss how to find employment.

In this manner the fishing would begin, rather as a by-job, to keep private persons from being idle, than from being considered as a serious trade.—But no sooner would they find that profit was reaped from it, than it would become a serious object with trading people of some capital and enterprise, by whom alone it could come to be carried to its full perfection.

No sooner would one or two merchants engage in this business as a serious object of trade, and fit out a small fleet to act in concert with one another, than their extraordinary success would not only induce themselves to extend that branch of trade as far as they could, but would also teach private independent adventurers, that if they hoped to reap the full profit from that trade which might be drawn from it, they must also associate with one another, so as to make their several vessels act in concert with one another also.

BUT as those masters of vessels who were part-owners also, would not wish to be brought

in to share in their profits alike with all the other ships that might be in company with them, and would rather be desirous that each vessel should reap what profit she could from her own superior industry or good fortune, they would find themselves under a sort of necessity to form articles of general association before they went on the voyage, in which association signals should be agreed upon for all cases in which they should be judged necessary, and rules established by which all disputes that might arise between the several independent vessels of the fleet should be determined; every vessel that belonged to the persons so associating, to be bound to abide by these rules during that particular voyage; but in all cases not included in these rules, to act each for her own independent profit, according to justice. It would be necessary that a law should be made, declaring that these associations, legally drawn out upon stamped paper, and formally signed by the contracting parties, should be considered by judges as binding upon the parties during their continuance, in case of any disputes that might arise.

It would soon be found by all these adventurers, that instead of paying the men an exact

act limited sum for the voyage, or per month, which should be the same in all cases, whatever were the success of the voyage, it would be much more for their interest to contrive to make the amount of the emoluments of the persons on board depend upon the success of the fishing, rising or falling with the profits of the owners. At the beginning it would be necessary to allow them fixed wages, to ensure them of something in case of a total want of success, without which they would not be prevailed with to go;—but, over and above that, it would be necessary to give certain premiums for encouragement. Thus, for every whale caught,——to the captain, the sum of
to each harpooner

common sailor and so on, proportioning the amount of the several sums to the importance of the station that they occupied in the ship—Besides that, there ought to be a good premium allowed to the person on board of such a ship who first discovered any whale that should be killed;——another premium to the man who should strike her with a harpoon;—and so on for every other important piece of service that required more than ordinary diligence, intrepidity, or labour. In this way every person on board would find his own interest promoted

moted by his diligence and skill, as well as by that of his associates. A master would find, that much of the profits of his voyage depended upon the skill and diligence of his crew, and would therefore be anxious to secure the best hands he could.—Those under him would likewise find, that the master, by his alacrity and diligence, contributed also to the benefit of all his ship's company; such a one would therefore be most prized by the sailors. This would recommend him to his employers.—Skill and good behaviour would thus become in all parties the only certain method of obtaining high profit;—and this would necessarily make the several persons concerned become masters of their business, and assiduous in the discharge of their employment, which are the only possible means of securing to this country any permanent advantage in the fishing.

THERE can be no doubt but that Britain, by a plan of conduct similar to this, would in time come to carry on the whale-fishery with as great profit as the Dutch or New-Englanders, even without any aid from government.—But the circumstance that would give her the most decided advantage over all other nations in this fishing,

fishing; would be to unite it with that of the herring-fishery; as these two could co-operate to promote the interests of one another in the happiest manner that could be imagined.

I PURPOSELY reserved till this occasion the mention of another drawback that the whale-fishers have always had to struggle with, viz. the high wages of the persons employed in that voyage. As these persons can only be employed for a few months in the voyage to Greenland; and as this happens to be at the busiest season for the coasting-trade, the persons so employed are in some measure thrown out of business for the remaining part of the season; on which account they require, and obtain much higher wages than would be necessary, were they to be kept in constant employment during the whole season.

INSTEAD, therefore, of laying these commodious vessels up in the harbour to rot, as they do at present, let us suppose that they unladed their blubber, &c. put ashore the apparatus of the Greenland fishery with the utmost expedition,——and took on board tackle, &c. for the herring-fishery, and immediately proceeded to the western coast for that purpose.

The

The same number of hands,——and the same boats that are fitting for the one fishery, are nearly equally proper for the other ;——and if the vessels that came from Greenland were not of two large a size, they would be perfectly well adapted to the herring-fishery *. The only inconvenience that could possibly arise from this arrangement would be, that the whole ships would usually be a little too late for the earliest fishing-season, as the Greenland ships could seldom come home in time to be at any of the places of rendezvous before the 22d of June; but they would have no difficulty in reaching the rendezvous before the 1st of October, and of thus being entitled to claim the bounty for the second fishing-season.

INSTEAD, however, of fixing the time of rendezvous precisely to two particular days only, I can see no inconvenience that would result from allowing any ship to enter to the fishing at any intermediate day between the 22d of June and 1st of October each year;—the collector or comptroller of the

* No vessel should be entitled to draw a premium for more than 80 tons, (if such is found to be the largest vessel necessary for the herring-fishery), whatever was her burden above that.

customs at the place of rendezvous giving a paper to the shipmaster, specifying the particular day when every such ship appeared at the rendezvous; from which date, the ship should be obliged to continue following the fish for the space of three months at least, or to the 11th day of January following, unless she had sooner completed her loading, before she could be entitled to the bounty. This would have the good effect to allow such vessels as were intended to be employed in the herring-fishery during the proper season, to pursue any other profitable employment at other times without restraint; and not lose any time, after having completed any other voyage, before they proceeded directly to the fishery, if at the proper season. In this manner the profits of the several owners of vessels, adventurers in this trade, would be greatly increased; and by consequence, they could afford to sell their fish much cheaper in any market than they can do at present; which is the great point that ought ever to be aimed at. The law ought to aim at encouraging every economical saving, and should therefore studiously remove every unnecessary bar out of the way of the adventurers.

If this liberty should be granted, it would be a strong encouragement to every adventurer; but it would be in a particular manner favourable to those employed in the Green-land fishery. For they would be at perfect liberty to remain in the northern seas as long as they found it profitable and safe for themselves to continue there; and as soon as they could unload at home, and take on board their fishing-tackle, could proceed immediately to the herring-fishery without losing a day, (and the loss of time to them who are obliged to have such a number of hands is of great moment). There they could employ themselves till they had completed their loading, or till the time was elapsed which entitled them to the bounty, and then would be at liberty to proceed on any profitable voyage without loss of time.

To facilitate both these trades, it would be found extremely convenient to establish a sort of *entrepot* or staple at Brassaound in Shetland, which would be directly in the road of the Greenland ships to the herring-fishery. There they might conveniently unload their whale fins, blubber, &c. where

it

it might be refined by the natives, while the ships were employed in the fishery. This would give spirit and activity to the natives of these northern isles; and would soon make that a great and a flourishing place, as it would be here that the Greenland herring-fishers could most economically take on board their nets and stores for the herring-fishery; and here also it would be most convenient for the Greenland ships universally to rendezvous, and to take on board their stores before they proceeded on their voyage. I need not point out the manifold advantages that would result to that part of the country from this arrangement.

ACCORDING to this plan, not an hour would be lost from the time that the Greenlandmen proceeded on their voyage to the northern seas, till they had completed their herring-fishery for the season. And whenever that fishing was over, these stout vessels would be immediately at liberty to take on board a cargo of herrings, and, without returning home, they might (having put on shore their superfluous hands, who could during winter be employed in mending nets, repairing their fishing-tackle, harpoons, &c.

to

to be ready by the time the vessel returned) proceed directly to Portugal, Spain, or the Straits, to dispose of it. From whence they could return with their loading just in time to take in their stores, and proceed again on their Greenland voyage.

THUS would begin anew their never-ceasing round of useful employment, which could not fail to benefit the country in the highest degree, and breed up an amazing number of hardy seamen, who would be ready to carry the British thunder 'round the globe whenever the exigencies of the state might require it, and make our little spot the envy, the astonishment, and the terror of all surrounding nations.

WOULD to God she could thus acquire power without ambition; and that, contented with her own territories, and with availing herself to the utmost of her own internal advantages, she should neither covet the dominions of another, nor endeavour to cramp their trade by unjust restrictions, or to disturb their quiet by unnecessary exertions of power. Then would she be beloved and revered by all mankind, and promote

in the highest degree the common felicity of the whole inhabitants of the globe! But vain are these wishes. Sooner shall the shadow be driven from its substance, than the heart of man, when elated by power, submit to be circumscribed by the feeble dictates of beneficence and humanity. Pride will ever trample the weak in the dust; and ambition aspire at extended dominion. Thus does man pervert the blessings of Heaven, and employ them on all occasions to the hurt of his fellow-creatures. The sympathetic heart turns with aversion from this scene of criminal enjoyments, and unsatisfactory delight, and says to itself, If this is the perfection of that rational nature which exalts man above the other creatures of God, all is indeed vanity and vexation of spirit.

THAT you, my dear Sir, may be often enabled to revel in the fairy fields of imaginary improvements, so as to lose sight as much as possible of the *real* and less pleasing scenes transacting around you, is the sincere prayer of your ever affectionate friend and humble servant.

APPENDIX

A P P E N D I X.

N U M B E R F I R S T.

AS the ancient monies in Great Britain have been mentioned several times in the foregoing letters, that the reader may be enabled, at one view, to perceive the value of them at any particular period, the following tables are subjoined.

It deserves to be noted, that when the monies of both England and Scotland obtained their present appellations, a pound of money contained literally a pound weight of silver, or twelve ounces *Troas* weight, of the usual alloy. This standard, however, was from time to time altered; so that, at different periods, the same nominal sum contained very different quantities of silver; which occasions many hasty readers to form very inadequate ideas of the real or comparative value of any commodity that may be mentioned in former times. By the industry of the ingenious Mess. Loundes and Fleetwood, the following table, of the several variations that have taken place in the coins of England, have been collected; and we are indebted to the very ingenious Mr. Rudiman for that of the Scots coins.

T A B L E I. *

SHEWING into how many pounds, shillings, and pence, a pound weight of silver hath been coined at various periods, with the proportion of alloy that it contained.

In ENGLAND.

In SCOTLAND.

A.D.	Reign.	F. S.	Alloy.	Tale.	A.D.	Reign.	F. S.	Alloy.	Tale.
	Before Edw. I.	11	2	0	18	20	0	18	20
1299	28 Edw. I.	11	2	0	18	20	3	1366	37
1346	20 Edw. III.	11	2	0	18	22	6	1367	38
1353	27 Edw. III.	11	2	0	18	25	0	1373	3
1421	9 Henry V.	11	2	0	18	30	0	1432	9
1422	1 Henry VI.	11	2	0	18	37	6	1450	9
1425	4 Henry VI.	11	2	0	18	30	0	1455	14
1460	19 Henry VI.	11	2	0	18	37	6	1474	15
1509	1 Henry VIII.	11	2	0	18	45	0	1482	23
1542	14 Henry VIII.	10	0	2	0	48	0	1529	16
1544	36 Henry VIII.	6	0	6	0	48	0	1554	13
1545	37 Henry VIII.	4	0	8	0	48	0	1564	23
1549	3 Edw. VI.	6	0	6	0	72	0	1571	4
1551	5 Edw. VI.	3	0	9	0	72	0	1577	10
1552	6 Edw. VI.	11	1	0	19	60	0	1579	12
1554	2 Mary,	11	0	1	0	60	0	1581	14
1559	2 Elizabeth,	11	2	0	18	60	0	1597	30
1600	43 Elizabeth,	11	2	0	18	62	0	1601	34
								1659	19

Since which it hath continued the same both as to weight and fineness.

Since which it hath continued the same both as to weight and fineness.

To enable the reader the more easily to compare the value of any sum of money formerly with the same sum at present, the following table, constructed from the foregoing, is added.

* This Table is divided into two parts; one for England, and one for Scotland: and each of these parts is subdivided into five columns;—containing,—1. The Year;—2. The Reign;—3. 4. The weight of *Fine Silver*, and of *Alloy*, in ounces and pennyweights;—and, 5. The *Tale*, in shillings and pence.

TABLE

TABLE II. *

Shewing the comparative value of the coins in *England*, and *Scotland*, with the several alterations they have undergone, from the earliest accounts to the present time.

One pound of money at the following periods.

In ENGLAND.

In SCOTLAND.

A.D.	Reign.	F. S. Pref. Val.				Reign.	F. S. Pref. Val.			
		Grains.	L.	s.	d. f.		Grains.	L.	s.	d. f.
	Before Edw. I.	5328.00	3	2	0 0	Before Rob. I.	5328.00	3	2	0 0
1299	28 Edward I.	5262.22	3	1	2 3					
1300						Robert I.	5074.20	2	17	10 2
1346	20 Edward III.	4736.00	2	15	1 2					
1353	27 Edward III.	4262.40	2	9	7 0					
1366						37 David II.	4262.00	2	9	7 1
1367						38 David II.	3637.72	2	2	4 0
1373						3 Robert III.	3330.00	1	18	9 0
1421	9 Henry V.	3552.00	2	1	4 0					
1422	1 Henry VI.	2841.60	1	13	0 3					
1425	4 Henry VI.	3552.00	2	1	4 0					
1432						9 James I.	2841.60	1	13	0 3
1450						9 James II.	1665.00	0	19	4 2
1455						14 James II.	1110.00	0	12	11 0
1460	39 Henry VI.	2841.60	1	13	0 3					
1474						15 James III.	740.00	0	8	7 1
1482						23 James III.	761.14	0	8	10 1
1509	1 Henry VIII.	2368.00	1	7	6 2					
1529						16 James V.	550.00	0	6	4 3
1542	34 Henry VIII.	2000.00	1	3	3 1					
1544	36 Henry VIII.	1200.00	0	13	11 2					
1545	37 Henry VIII.	800.00	0	9	3 3					
1549	3 Edward VI.	800.00	0	9	3 3					
1551	5 Edward VI.	400.00	0	4	7 3					
1552	6 Edward VI.	1768.00	1	0	6 3					
1554	2 Mary,	1760.00	1	0	5 3	13 Mary,	406.00	0	4	8 3
1559	4 Elizabeth,	1776.00	1	0	8 0					
1564						23 Mary,	293.00	0	3	5 0
1571						4 James VI.	258.00	0	3	0 0
1577						10 James VI.	244.20	0	2	10 0
1579						12 James VI.	240.00	0	2	9 2
1581						14 James VI.	220.00	0	2	6 3
1597						30 James VI.	176.00	0	2	0 3
1600	43 Elizabeth,	1718.7	1	0	0 0					
1601						34 James VI.	146.60	0	1	8 2
1659						19 Charles II.	143.2	0	1	8 0

* This table is divided into two parts; one for England, and one for Scotland: and each of these parts is subdivided into four columns; — containing. — 1. The Year; — 2. The Reign; — 3. The weight of *Fine Silver* in grains; — and, 4. The present value in British pounds, shillings, pence, and farthings.

IN

IN the above table I have chosen, not only to express the value of a pound of money at each period that any alteration took place, in Sterling money at present; but have also marked the grains of pure silver contained in such pound of money at each period, that the reader may be enabled, with little trouble, to convert any sum that may be mentioned at any period of British history into present Sterling money; which may be done with the greatest facility by means of the following table.

T A B L E III.

SHEWING the number of grains of pure silver contained in the different kinds of money in Great Britain, from one farthing to a thousand pounds Sterling.

<i>Sterling. Farthings.</i>	<i>Grains.</i>	<i>Sterling. Shillings.</i>	<i>Grains.</i>	<i>Sterling. Pounds.</i>	<i>Grains.</i>
1	1.790	1	85.93	1	1718.709677418
2	3.580	2	171.87	2	3437.419354836
3	5.370	3	257.80	3	5156.129032254
<i>Pence.</i>		4	343.74	4	6874.83809672
1	7.161	5	429.67	5	8593.548387090
2	14.322	6	515.61	6	10312.258064508
3	21.483	7	601.54	7	12030.967741926
4	28.645	8	687.48	8	13749.677419344
5	35.806	9	773.41	9	15468.387096762
6	42.967	10	859.35	10	17187.096774180
7	50.129	11	945.29	20	34374.193548360
8	57.290	12	1031.22	30	51561.290322540
9	64.451	13	1117.16	40	68748.387096720
10	71.612	14	1203.09	50	85935.483870900
11	78.774	15	1289.03	100	171870.967741800
<i>Shillings.</i>		16	1374.96	200	343741.935483600
1	85.935	17	1460.90	300	515612.903225400
		18	1546.83	400	687483.870962200
		19	1632.77	500	859354.838709000
				1000	1718709.677418000

Directions

Directions for the use of these Tables.

WHEN you want the value of any sum at any particular period, by looking at Table II. you see how many grains of pure silver was contained in a pound of money at that time; which being multiplied by the number of pounds specified, shows the number of grains of silver contained in the whole sum.

To reduce this into present Sterling money, look at Table III. ; and having subtracted the sum next below it in that table from your total amount, the index opposite to it will point out the nearest whole sum in Sterling money. If there is any quotient, look again into the table, and subtract the next nearest sum, whose index will point out the value in Sterling money; and so on, continually subtracting the quotient, you obtain the smaller sums contained in it to the value of a farthing.

E X A M P L E S.

In the year 1316 a quarter of wheat sold in England at 4l. ; what would be the value of that quarter of wheat in the present money of Great Britain ?

By Table II. it appears, that in the year 1316 the pound of money in England contained 5262.22 grains of pure silver; so that 4l. contained 21048.88 grains; which may be reduced to the present money of Britain by the help of Table III. thus.

£. 10 0 0 0	-	21048.88
		17187.09
		3861.79
2 0 0 0	-	3437.41
		424.38
0 4 0 0	-	343.74
		80 64
0 0 11 0	- -	78 77
		1.87
0 0 0 1	- -	1.79
£. 12 4 11 1		8

So

So that wheat at that time sold for twelve pounds four shillings and eleven pence one farthing per quarter of the present money of Great Britain; that is to say, the four pounds then contained as much silver as would have amounted to that sum if coined in our mint at present.

If the sum you want to ascertain does not consist of an even number of pounds, the shillings may be thus reduced. Divide the number of grains of which the pound consisted at that time by 20, which gives the number of grains in a shilling; and then multiply that by the number of shillings whose value you want to obtain.

EXAMPLE.

In the year 1346 wheat sold for two shillings per quarter. Now at that time, by Table II. it appears, that the pound contained 4736 grains; therefore

$$20)4736(236.8$$

40

2

73

473.6 = to 2s. at that time.

60

429.6 = L. 0 5 0 0

136

44.0

120

42.9 = 0 0 6 0

16.0

1. 1

16.0

0 5 6 0 of our present money.

If the fractions go as low as pence, they may be reduced into grains, either by dividing the shilling by 12, or the pound by 240, and then multiplying by the number of pence.

EXAMPLE.

E X A M P L E.

In the year 1269 wheat sold at 6l. 8s. 4d. per quarter,—required the present value in Sterling money.

In 1269 the pound contained 5328 grains of pure silver, therefore

	5328	and 20) 5328 (266.4, and 12) 2664 (22.2	
	6	40	8
	—	—	—
	31968	grs. in 6l.	132
	2131.2	grs. in 8s.	120
	88.8	grs. in 4d.	—
	—	128	24
	34188.0	120	24
£. 19 0 0	17187.09	—	—
	—	80	—
	17000.91	80	—
9 0 0	15468.38	—	—
	—	—	—
	1532.53	—	—
0 17 0	1460.90	—	—
	—	—	—
	71.63	—	—
0 0 10	71.61	—	—
—	—	—	—
£. 19 17 10	.03	—	—

a quarter of wheat was worth 19l. 17s. 10d. of our present money.

In old times it was customary to express almost all great sums by marks rather than by pounds. Where this occurs, the grains contained in a mark may always be found by dividing the pound at that time by three and multiplying by two; a mark having been at all times exactly two thirds of a pound, or eight ounces.

E X A M P L E.

E X A M P L E

In the year 1244, Henry III. of England found, that the Pope at that time drew annually out of England 60,000 marks. What would be the value of this in pounds Sterling at present?

At that time the pound continued 5328 grains, therefore

	3) 9328 (1776	
	3	
	—	2
	23	—
	21	3552
	—	
	22	60000
	21	—
	18	213120000.
£. 100000 0 0		171870967.74
		—
		41249032.26
20000 0 0		34374193.54
		—
		6874838.72
4000 0 0		6874838 70
		—
£. 124,000 0 0		.02

60,000 marks then was equal to 124,000l. Sterling at present.

THE reader who is not much conversant in decimal arithmetic, may perhaps be at a loss clearly to understand the above example.—Let him then be told, that any sum may be multiplied or divided by ten by adding or taking away one figure at the right-hand side of the number.—Keeping this in his mind, let him look into Table III. he will find opposite to L. 10 the number 17187.096774; but the number 17187 is four figures short of the number 213120000, which he was in search of. Remove, therefore, the decimal point four figures to the right, and it becomes

comes 171870967.74; and the index 10, having four figures added to it, becomes 100000.

In the same manner the next quotient requires the decimal point to be removed three figures to the right hand; so that 20 now becomes 20000;— and the next number 40, by the addition of two cyphers, becomes 4000; so that the whole amounts to 124,000l.

It was to enable the reader to find out any large sum without multiplication, that the decimal figures were carried to such a depth; for by removing the decimal point one figure back, it comes to express just ten times its former value; so that the sum opposite to one pound, may be made to express any whole sum beginning with the figure 1 as under;

1	-	-	1718.709677418
10	-	-	17187.09677418
100	-	-	171870.9677418
1,000	-	-	1718709.677418
10,000	-	-	17187096.77418
100,000	-	-	171870967.7418
1,000,000	-	-	1718709677.418
10,000,000	-	-	17187096774.18
100,000,000	-	-	171870967741.8
1,000,000,000	-	-	1718709677418.

and in the same manner may the figures 2. 3. 4. &c. be made to express any sum beginning with either of these figures, without any farther trouble but that of adding as many cyphers to the right-hand side of the index, as you find it necessary to remove the decimal point backwards.

THIS being premised, I shall add a few other examples that may serve to amuse the reader a little, and make this subject somewhat more familiar to him.

It

It is remarked by historians, that David I. of Scotland endowed religious houses during his own reign to the amount of 60,000*l.* a year.—This was besides what had been endowed before his time.

To ascertain the real value of that sum, we must remember, that the pound in Scotland at that time as well as in England, contained, 5328 grains of fine silver, therefore

		5328
		60000

£. 100,000	-	319680000.
		171870967.74

80,000	-	147809032.36
		137496774.19

6000	-	10312258.07
		10312258.06

£. 186,000		.01

he granted to the Clergy 186,000*l.* above what they formerly enjoyed.

THE whole revenues of the clergy in Scotland at present hardly amount to 60,000*l.* so that this prince alone gave away to upwards of thrice that amount, besides what had been allotted to them formerly.—And if it be supposed that money then was about three or four times the value it bears at present, we may reasonably compute, that the revenues of the clergy in Scotland at that time could not be short of 500,000*l.* Sterling.

Ann 1269, Alexander King of Scotland refused to allow the Pope's Nuncio to come into his kingdom, or levy any money for the purpose of the Holy wars;—but, of his own free gift sent a present to the Pope of a thousand marks for that purpose.

AT

No. I. NATIONAL INDUSTRY. 397

At this time the pound of money in Scotland contained 5328 grains; therefore

	3) 5328 (1776	
	3	2
	23	
	21	3552
		1000
	22	
	21	
	18	3552000
£. 2000 0 0	-	3437419.03
		114580.97
60 0 0	-	103122.58
		11458.39
6 0 0	-	10312.25
		1146.14
0 13 0	-	1117.16
		28.98
0 0 4	-	28.64
£. 2066 13 4		.34

the amount of it in the present money of Britain was 2066l. 13s. 4d. Sterling.

In the year 1354 the exports from England of wools, and woollen manufactures, were as under, viz.

	l.	s.	d.
Thirty-one thousand six hundred fifty-one sacks and a half of wool, at 6l. value each sack, amount to	189909	0	0
Three thousand thirty-six hundred sixty-five felts, at 40s. value each hundred, at six score, amount to	6073	1	8
Whereof the custom amounts to	81624	1	1
Four thousand seven hundred and seventy-four cloths and an half, at 40s. value each cloth,	9549	0	0
Eight thousand sixty-one pieces and an half of worsted, after 16s. 8d. per piece, is	6717	18	4
Whereof the customs amount to	215	13	7
Total exports of wool and woollen goods,	294088	14	8

At

At this time the pound contained 4262.4 grains of pure silver; therefore

29408.8	and 20	4262.4	(213.12	and 12)	213.12	(17.76
4262.4		40	14		12	8
117635.2		26	852.48		93	142.08
588176		20	2131.2		84	
1764528						
588176		62	2983.68		91	
1176352		60			84	
1253520691.2		24			72	
2983.68		20			72	
142.08						
1253523816.96		40				
1203096774.19	-	40				
			L. 700000	0	0	
50427042.77						
34374193.54	-	-	20000	0	0	
16052849.23						
15468387.09	-	-	9000	0	0	
584462.14						
515612.90	-	-	300	0	0	
68849.24						
68748.38	-	-	40	0	0	
100.86						
85.93	-	-	0	1	0	
14.93						
14.32	-	-	0	0	2	
61	-	-	0	0	0	
			L. 729340	1	2	

the woollen exports amounted to 729,340l. 1s. 2d. of our present money.

If it be supposed that the same weight of silver was three times the value as at present, the above sum would be equal to 2,188,020l. 3s. 10½d. now; which will tend to shew that the trade of England at that time was not nearly so insignificant as is generally imagined.

In the year 1548 wheat sold for 6s. 8d. per quarter; but at that time the pound contained 800 grains of fine silver; therefore

20)	800	(40	and	12)	40	(3-333
	80	6			36	8
	00)	240			40	26.664
		26.66			36	
		266.66			40	
£. 0	3	0	0	-	257.80	36
		8.86			40	
0	0	1	0	-	7.16	36
0	0	0	1	-	1.70	4
£. 0	3	1	1			

the quarter of wheat at that time, cost only 3s. 1d. 1f. of the present money of Britain.

AGAIN,

AGAIN, in the year 1455, wheat sold at 1 s. per quarter; but in that year the pound contained 3552 grains of fine silver; therefore

20)3552(177.6 the grains in one shilling anno 1455
 20 171.87 = 2 shillings at present.

155 5.73
 140 5.37 = 3 farthings.

152 .36 2s. 3 farthings present money.

140

120

120

the quarter cost 2s. 3f. of the present money of Britain.

I MIGHT produce many other examples to shew the utility of these tables; but it is imagined these already produced, will be sufficient to shew the reader in what manner he himself may apply them to any purpose that occurs.

NUMBER

NUMBER SECOND.

Copy of a letter which appeared in the Weekly Magazine, October 27, 1774, complaining of the insolence of customhouse-officers in the Western Isles.

SIR,

BEING a constant reader of your Miscellany, and observing the spirit of emigration, which seems to be epidemic through Great Britain and Ireland, I have often seriously revolved in my mind what could be the source of this disorder, that is likely, in no distant period, to depopulate the mother-country, and leave our ancient Kingdom the resort of owls and dragons, and other solitary animals, who shun the light, and seem displeased at the human race. Ancient Babylon, for its crying iniquities, assailed my thoughts, and I deplored the ruins of that once mistress of the world. I have ruminated on the various causes of this calamity described in your Magazine, and sometimes been ready to adopt one or other of them for the ground work, to wit, Levity, Ambition, Caprice, or Oppression, from the landed gentry: yet so inherent is the love of Country, so prevalent the habits and familiarity of friends, so pleasing the prospect of enjoying peace and ease amidst one's family and connections, and withal, to me, so alluring is a quiet and domestic life, that I am apt to think none

of the three first-mentioned passions would have efficacy with old age to remove themselves and families to such a distance as the continent of America, to brave the wild Atlantic, and expose a beloved wife and infant children to the boisterous element, and rigorous inclemency of seasons, not to mention the attacks of savages, which sometimes are to be dreaded.

I AT last fixed on Oppression; which, Hydra-like, makes its appearance in our land under various shapes.—Not many months ago, a king's yacht made her appearance in the northern islands where I sojourn: the design of entrapping all contraband and prohibited goods gave me little concern, as that was an article I never in my life dealt to any extent in, or with the smallest views of profit. I happen to have a numerous small family, who, on the common report of rude behaviour sometimes exercised by the petty officers vested with commissions, were under alarm, and clung to me with panic fears. I soothed them the best way in my power, and told them the truth, that I had nothing to dread, and expected no insults. Soon thereafter, a row-boat came in sight; and, upon landing, one of the crew, naming himself their chief, but not to be distinguished otherwise than by a more rude and insolent aspect, accosted me thus, "I must have the keys of your cellars." This was immediately complied with, and a parcel of lumber overhauled to no purpose; from this place an egress was made, and this chief, with the daring air of a Turkish bashaw, ordered his raggamuffins to enter my dwelling apartment, where every private corner

corner was ransacked : and although I warmly intreated and besought this fellow, who termed himself the head of the gang, to accompany those he ordered into my apartments, imagining him commissioned to oversee and prevent any clownish or indiscreet behaviour, all was to no purpose ; he deigned not to enter. The result was, carrying off about twenty-one gallons corn-spirits, which I kept by me for the purpose of giving travellers on the road, who frequently come and go a-foot eight miles, for necessary causes, or for accommodating my few tenants upon emergencies, such as funerals, festivals, or the like ; and which is the sole recruiting cordial they have through the year, as my country cannot admit of strong ale or beer, the gain it yields not by far serving the inhabitants for bread ; and hundreds, I had almost said thousands, given out for oat-meal annually. This, truly, is one species of oppression, almost intolerable in a land of liberty ; and I begin to cease being astonished or amazed at my fellow-subjects flying from such unheard-of infringements upon it. What was the consequence of this petty seizure ?—Why, I was told, before the fellows got to their vessel, they were mortally intoxicate with the fruits of their rapine, missed their way, and almost their lives ;—so far from tending to any advantage to the revenue !

I AM far from diminishing the crime of smuggling ; very far ! I think it a scandalous branch of trade, and fit to be suppressed : but let not an indiscriminate robbery be practised upon us under this pretence :

let the extensive dealers in that way smart, as they often do with justice; only let not the punishment be inflicted in an insufferable manner, and contrary to law. I have been told, that, over the kingdom, an officer, upon an information where contraband goods are deposited, must swear to the truth of his information, then obtain a justice of the peace warrant against the very spot where the goods are said to be lodged, and to search only that particular place. General warrants, in their very nature, are so crying an abuse of order and good government, that I thought they had been long exploded.—The revenue officers are, many of them, men whose character I esteem, and who walk up to their duty in a becoming manner; they ought, however, to be cautious and observant of the conduct of their subalterns intrusted with authority. In the present case, I am credibly informed, that the commander of the yacht was a gentleman esteemed for many amiable qualifications, and who detested low or vulgar proceedings: but how often are individuals subjected to barbarous usage from the underlings in power, with which our country swarms, and who suck the wealth and honest industry of the poor, and ruin their morals by debauchery and bad example. This was conducted on no better authority than a deputation from the board of customs, and no other formalities asked or observed. If then, the Honourable Commissioners shall grant such warrants, and employ a parcel of banditti to make an indiscriminate search into any gentleman's private apartments through the kingdom, and]

and that it may be exercised through mere wantonness of power, I, though old and infirm, must yet forsake my country, nearest and dearest connections, and seek for liberty, so connate with the human heart, though it were in the wilds of Tartary, or forests of Delectaria; for, under the name of rank despotism, more arbitrary proceedings cannot take place. And I wish the wise council of the nation may, at their new sitting of parliament, check these and other such abuses of power; or my general advice shall be, to the whole district, to elope from a country no longer the boast of freedom, but the sink of licentiousness.

If my notions of restraint on the conduct of revenue-officers be wrong, I beg to be set right, and to have the laws in such cases plainly depicted. I shall point out the offenders names in the present case when desired, in order that their conduct may be inquired into by the worthy and good at the helm of affairs; for *Veritas* is my motto.

Yours, &c.

THULE.

NUMBER

N U M B E R T H I R D

Copy of a letter which also appeared in the Weekly Magazine, November 17, 1774, containing remarks on the nature of the fishery for dried ling, &c. in the Western Isles.

S I R,

AS your Magazine is the channel of conveying any extraordinary occurrences that happen in the kingdom, and the only way that uncommon grievances can reach the public ear, from persons so situated as to be debarred legal redress without expences, which possibly their finances cannot afford, permit me to occupy a small part of your Miscellany with a narrative, which shall at least, if void of every other embellishment, be sincere truth.

I HAVE now been thirty years employed in the mercantile way on some northern islands of his Majesty's dominions, where the inhabitants carry on a considerable branch of the fisheries, and enjoy the bounty conferred by act of parliament, of three shillings per hundred weight on ling, cod, and tusk fish, exported to foreign countries. This indulgence, when seasons are benign, and markets abroad tolerable, enables the individuals to live with decency and ease, notwithstanding Nature has not been liberal to them as to soil, climate, and other benefits accruing from agriculture. Indeed I am apt to think, that
even

even this would be considerably improved upon in spite of the seeming difficulties before suggested, but that the bulk of the people have been, and are, accustomed to go upon the fishing during the summer-season, and are thereby denied the means of cultivating their grounds properly, or providing manure, which is to be got at that time of the year only.

THE gentlemen who have property in these islands, oblige their tenants or farmers to fit out boats, lines, and other apparatus for the fishing, and give them a certain allowance for every fish they bring on shore. These who have little or no property are at the expence of every appurtenance: and to give an idea of the amounts, the following is nowise aggravated.

To expence for a six-oared boat new fitted out, mast, sail, &c. is	6 0
To ordinary wages for six men during two months of summer,	6 0
To tackling, lines, hooks, &c. at a mean compute,	5 0
To 3 bolls 12 lispds meal, <i>communibus annis</i> not under	2 0
To contingencies, bed-cloaths, cooking uten- sils, Midsummer feast, and Lammas fare- well feast,	0 12

£. 19 12

From

From which view of the matter, which can be ascertained by men of candour as strict truth, the precarious gains arising from this branch will be found insignificant. I have myself for many years launched out a considerable subject in this way, and, one year with another, cannot boast of returns equivalent to the outlay, at an average. Three hundred ling-fish are esteemed good fishing for a boat; many times below, but seldom, for my own share, have I experienced it rise above. The people who go on their own venture I allow sixpence for each ling as they run, and take the whole charge of apparatus upon myself. The markets I generally send them to are, Hamburgh in Germany, and Barcelona in Spain: if they render nine stivers each ling, it is the utmost; and, indeed, they must be large when this arises of free money to the vender: so that, when salt, curing, and transporting these fish to the different loading creeks in the islands, is considered, it must appear to the world, that if it were not for the gratuity conferred by government, that branch behoved to be given over, and the Dutch must monopolize the golden harvest of our coasts.—After what is premised, I now come to the design of this letter.

THE Honorable the C——s of C——s have thought expedient this year to issue forth peremptory orders to the shipping officers in these islands, not to certify any fish to a foreign market as intitled to the bounty of three shillings per Cwt. excepting they are dry, merchantable, and not salt-burnt; and this without exception of what markets they are appoint-

ed for, or allowing any to judge of the quality of the fish, save the shipping-officers: so that, by this arbitrary detrimental plan, matters are like to be conducted to the infinite prejudice of the merchant.

For above fifty years, matters have been carried on agreeable to the spirit of the act of parliament, and the views of the legislature in framing such act have been fully answered, without fraud or sinister arts employed by the trader or merchant. When seasons are backward, and the fish not sufficiently dried, the officers were permitted to make deductions of five-pence per Cwt. upwards or under, as they thought circumstances required; and in this the merchant cheerfully acquiesced: but, by the present mode, no alternative is left;—the bounty must be entirely superseded, and many industrious and helpless individuals rendered bankrupt, who, like myself, have little else to depend upon. Can it be supposed, or rationally suspected, that the merchant, for the views of obtaining this bounty of three shillings per Cwt. on fish, would risk his whole subject, for which he expects at market thirteen or fourteen shillings per Cwt.? Can, I say, (allowing him to be the most ungrateful of men, which surely he must, if he harboured a thought of abusing the goodness and benignity conferred by government), a thought so inconsistent with his own interest be with any propriety entertained? Here self and the public are so linked, and obliged to co-operate, that it appears the most surprising thing in nature for the Honorable Board to hint at suspicions of fraud or duplicity.

DIFFERENT

DIFFERENT markets require distinct qualities in the fish: the Germans want them to have abundance of salt; and if they are smooth and white, though not hard-dried, they answer that market best. Spain, being a hot climate, where salt, at least oversalted fish, would soon ruffle and spoil, requires the ling to be moderately salted, and of consequence to admit thus being dried to the consistence of bone, which every connoisseur in the fish-trade must know is impracticable with fish liberally salted; for, dry these fish as you will, by a night's confinement in a warehouse, or any close place, the salt will occasion a dampness, to appearance as if not thoroughly dried. Now, in this dilemma, what are the merchants and fish curers to do? Spain cannot exhaust all their fish; they are debarred sending them to the next proper place; or, if they do, the bounty conferred is withdrawn, and the proceeds in such case cannot indemnify the proprietor for his expence and prime cost.

WHERE shall the sufferers appeal? All arguments with the shipping-officers, from a sense of duty, or perhaps caprice, are vain: they are so and so enjoined, and they will not risk their offices by counteracting the Commissioners orders. They acknowledge the seeming absurdity of this measure; yea, they acknowledge that the fish exported to the different markets for preceding years have been the same in quality as are now refused to be certified, but redargue their instructions.—It were to be wished some of the gentlemen in authority were readers of your Magazine, who would, I am confident, be shocked

shocked at such an unusual stretch of authority all of a sudden exercised by the Hon. Board of Customs. They, for many years past, have been throwing obstructions, which have a tendency to hamper and curb the merchants in these islands: they have loaded government with a new expence of sending over yearly one or other officer, under the name of inspector, who, if I am not wrong informed, have an allowance of ten shillings Sterling *per diem*, by and about his or their ordinary salaries going on; and it is no doubt natural to think, that their reports, in order to appear necessary, may insil prejudices into the ears of their constituents.

But, whatever may be in that, I dare be bold to say, from long experience, that there is not in Great Britain more accuracy or integrity manifested in any branch than in the fish weighing from these islands. And what makes an aggravation of this superfluous expence of inspectors, &c. is, that we have at the head of our customhouse here, a gentleman who would do honour to a higher department; and whose conduct is irreproachable, as he is remarkable for good sense and every moral duty.—If the Hon. Board mean to pay these extraordinary officers by curtailing, or rather totally withdrawing, the munificent and free grant bestowed as an encouragement on the fisheries, they, it is likely, will gain their ends. I hope, however, that matters are not brought entirely to this dilemma; and that the Hon. Board, or, if they shall decline it, that the Lords of the Treasury, will consider of, and put a stop to such lawless and uncommon exertions of power, to crush a whole

whole country. I again ardently pray, that these hints may fall into the hands of some benevolent person who has the power and will look into this grievance, with many more incumbrances to trade which these islands have groaned beneath for a series of years,—for numberless they are, and shall be fully represented in some future paper.

Yours, &c.

MERCATOR.

N. B. Why such a stir about the white-fishing bounty, when two Greenland vessels equal the whole sum expended on debentures for the whole northern islands?

[I heartily join in the same prayer with this seeming sensible person,—It is a pity he has not yet fulfilled his promise].

NUMBER FOURTH.

Copy of a Letter, which also appeared in the Weekly Magazine, 1st of June 1775, containing a very particular historical account of the ancient and present state of the Zetland isles, with the various hardships they have been made successively to undergo from the unjust avarice of their superiors.

SIR,

YOUR having given room in your useful publication to my neighbours *Thule* and *Mercator*, containing complaints of some particular hardships the country of Zetland labours under, gives me hopes that you will allow

allow the more general complaints thereof to have the same chance of reaching the ear of the public. *Shute* observes, "It is better to emigrate to unknown and uncultivated countries, than to remain in a land where the inhabitants are invaded in their most essential privileges: their houses and most retired apartments are exposed to be searched and violated by the lowest class of men who bear a deputation from the C——s of C——s, and have no other warrant whatever; but, assisted by still a lower class of mariners, carrying naked swords and pistols in a country where swords have long been converted into sickles and scythes." This is a grievance, no doubt, peculiar to this country, but it is well with him that he has the means of emigrating in his power. As to the generality of the householders in this country, I maintain, that not one in forty of them have it in their power to emigrate with their families, for want of money, and the subjects to raise it from, to pay even the present low freight to America; and therefore the aged must remain in a state of increasing poverty till death mercifully relieves them. To point out some of the various causes of this general poverty is my intention.

THESE islands, lying betwixt 60 and 61 degrees 10 minutes north latitude, are comparatively barren, the best crops never affording black oats and bear (the only grains sown) to serve the inhabitants three fourths of the year; and often the crops are so bad as not to maintain them one third of the year, though their allowance of bread is much less than in any other country. There are no trees, and their
fishings

fishings are their only resources to enable them to provide the necessaries of life. In this situation these islands have long remained. They were subject to the crown of Norway till 1469; when, in the marriage contract of King James III. of Scotland, with Margaret, daughter of Christian I. King of Norway, they were mortgaged to James for a part of his Queen's portion, redeemable upon payment of 8000 florins. In this treaty and contract it was expressly stipulated, That, whilst these islands remained in the possession of Scotland, no innovation should be made in their laws and constitution; and every immunity, freedom, and privilege, should be preserved to the inhabitants; and no imposition, tax, or duty of any kind exacted from them, other than the *fest* in use to be paid to the crown of Norway yearly, being a fixed rate payable from the lands when laboured; and in whatever future contracts betwixt James IV. and VI. and Denmark, ancient these islands, their privileges and immunities were expressly reserved; long experience having rendered it incontestable, that they would never be able to pay more, unless they became, by such increased payment, in the most abject state of poverty.

THE lands of this country are divided into rooms, each room consisting of a certain number of merk-lands from twelve-penny to four-penny per merk. Each penny is valued at one and one third merks of butter, and one and one third shilling Scots of money, these being reckoned of equal value; so that lands estimated at twelve-pennies per merk-land, pay sixteen

sixteen merks of butter and sixteen shillings Scots of money; ten-penny, nine-penny, six-penny, and four-penny lands in proportion. This is payable to the landholders, who have generally laid on a grassum of eight shillings Scots *per merk* of land, of whatever number of pennies it may consist. One merk of butter is the twenty-fourth part of a lispond; the lispond was then, as it is still in the neighbouring countries of Norway and Faro, eighteen pound weight; so that one merk of butter was twelve ounces. Besides this payment to the landholder or proprietor, the natural possessors of lands, who were almost all of them proprietors of their possessions, paid the corn-teind [tithe] partly in butter and partly in oil (and in some rooms the teind of of the corn was drawn) at a certain fixed rate for each merk of land. Oil measured by canns did not exceed two Scots pints [two gallons English] to the cann. In many places a part of the scatt was paid in butter, and the cow-teind was always payable in butter, at the rate of three merks of butter for a calf and cow. In this state matters remained for some time, and the inhabitants frugally subsisted in state of mediocrity.

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, while Popery darkened the land, their religious traders found means to beg from these islands some money, under the name of a *watle*, for the extraordinary benefit the people were to have from the holy water being liberally distributed among them, as the term sufficiently indicates. This payment, or gratuity, was to be continued only a few years; but when, in the reign of King James V. the rents of these islands, payable

payable to the crown, were given for the support of his natural son Robert Stewart, abbot of Holyrood-house, afterwards Earl of Orkney, and then to his son Patrick, they not only continued, but increased this imposition; and at this day the country pays above 800 l. Scots yearly in name thereof. These two Earls, taking advantage of their influence at court, and the distance of the Zetland islands from the seat of government, committed innumerable acts of oppression, and in such instances as would not now obtain credit, whereby they took to themselves near one third of all the lands in the country; which on their forfeiture, returned not to the true proprietors, but remained with the crown.

ANNO 1600, Earl Patrick Stewart built the castle of Scalloway, the walls whereof remain still entire. The oppression he committed in Orkney and Zetland, for services to this house are yet remembered; one of which was, his compelling the inhabitants of Zetland to deliver nine oxen and 122 sheep yearly for the support of his table. Among other acts of oppression and violence, these Earls increased the weight of the lispond and merk of butter to at least twenty-two pound to the lispond: and although, upon complaint of these oppressions, their other conduct was enquired into, and they both justly condemned to the punishment of treason, and suffered accordingly; yet these exactions were continued, and do continue to this day, rather increased than diminished.

MATTERS remained nearly so until the rebellion in Charles I.'s reign. In these times of rapine and confusion,

fusion, this country fell into the hands of the family of Morton, whose factors or chamberlains raised the weight to twenty four pound to the lispond; and now the country not being able to make so much butter as pay the rents in that kind, conform to the encreased weight, they found means to establish a fixed price on the butter not delivered in kind, more than double of the original rate, viz. fifty-eight shillings Scots per lispond: and it is to be observed, that the instrument used for weighing was and is called by its original Norwegian name, a *bismar**, being a sort of wooden steel yard, and of all weights in use the most liable to deceit. The chamberlains assumed to themselves the power to appoint a man in each parish to weigh the butter, and measure the oil. This person was paid by them, and removeable at pleasure. The weight remained on this footing till anno 1694, or thereabouts, when Colonel Robert Elphinstone of Lopness procured the Chamberlainship. He raised and established the weight at twenty-six pound to the lispond; and, in 1736, Mr. Andrew Ross, then factor for the Earl of Morton, sensible of the most egregious iniquity practised on the inhabitants by weighing on the bismars, (some of which he found to be set at thirty-six pound to the lispond), proposed to the landholders to have this instrument laid aside, and the known weight by scale and beam to be established; and prevailed in having the lispond settled at twenty-eight pound; to which some of the landholders consented: and it was agreed to,

* This seems to be nearly the same with what was formerly known in England by the name *ancient* weight, long ago abolished by law.

and ordered by him, that the tacksmen of the crown-rents, and other receivers of tithes and scatt butter, &c. should not take any greater weight, under the penalty of 500 merks Scots for each transgression. And the fifty-eight shillings Scots as the penal price for every lispond of butter not delivered in kind, remained unquestioned; which, in some measure, lightened the burden of the former oppressive increased weight.

THE crown-rents were then and since farmed out by parishes to the highest bidder; and the receivers of butter have gradually, by imperceptible additions, raised the weight, except in one or two ministeries, to thirty pound to the lispond, and the cann of oil to two one fourth pints; and it is now, in 1775, openly contended, that this increased weight and measure shall not only remain and be fixed, but also that this justly abolished, and scandalously unjust and deceitful instrument, the bismar, shall be restored; and further, that this long-established penal price of 4s. 10d. Sterling for each lispond of butter, not delivered in kind, shall be broke through, and the very highest price for this increased lispond shall be the rule of payment; and no less than 7s. 6d. Sterling is exacted for this lispond; which, if it had remained at its original weight, would not, at the present advanced price of butter in almost all countries, have exceeded 4s. 10d. Sterling. And it is remarkable, that, some years ago, when this grease-butter could not be sold higher than 3s. Sterling per lispond, those that delivered a little more to the chamberlain than they were liable to, had only that price allowed

allowed them, at the same time that others, who could not deliver their full proportion, were charged fifty-eight shillings Scots for the deficiency. These payments were and are made by the tenants; which perhaps facilitates the imposition, as they were the first sufferers, and their farms are small.

It is in fact too true, that, however hateful in the sight of God and man, every act of oppression is, especially those that affect the latest unborn generations, yet succeeding chamberlains and factots have always, not only used their utmost authority to continue the payments they found had been made, but likewise most of them have raised some additional payment, though otherwise men of fair characters, and in private life of great humanity: this seeming to be always looked upon by them as the surest means to recommend them to the favours of the crown's donatary, who have always had interest at court, or lucrative offices in their own disposal or recommendation.

UNTIL anno 1748, the chamberlains of Zeland had always been vested with the supreme authority within the country, both in criminal and civil jurisdiction, and with the vice-admiralty thereof, and, for forty years by-gone with the first office in the customs; so that they have always had the means to bring opposition to silence, if not submission. At present the crown-rents amount, in the articles of butter and oil, to 1700 lisponds of butter, and 1800 cannas of oil; and that part of the ministers stipends to 1600 lisponds of butter, and 4900 cannas of oil; which makes in all 3300 lisponds of butter, and 6700 cannas of oil; the clergy having never been behind in tak-

ing the same weight and measure the crown's donat-ars did; so the increase of weight and measure of butter and oil is not less than 2300 lisponds at eighteen pound to the lispond, and 837 canns of oil. Now the whole butter made in the country cannot equal one half of these payments to the crown and kirk, though the landholders get none; and a little management betwixt these two may raise the grease-butter of Zetland to as high a price as the butter in England gives, if once the established price of 58 s. Scots per lispond is broke through. And although there are sufficient teinds to raise competent stipends to the ministers of the gospel, arising from the corn-teind, cow-teind, wool and lamb-teind, and considerably more than is paid them at present, or can be reasonably allowed them by any future decreets of augmentation; yet, contrary to all good order, and maxims of law and policy, that industry never be taxed where there is other sufficient means, the fishings, on which this country chiefly depends, are severely taxed, and rated very high, towards payment of the stipends, and as rigorously exacted: for where ling-fish is in use of payment, twelve or eighteen ling for each fishing-boat is exacted, and is rated in place of three pence Sterling for each; yet, when bad fishing or accident prevents the payment in kind, the poor fisherman is said to be greatly favoured if he escapes with the payment of five pence or six pence per ling. Two ministries are happy, in that, by use of payment, the fish-teind is settled at so much money per boat, and the corn-teind at a certain rate of money also per merk of land.

I HAVE

I HAVE said above, that these islands were to remain for ever free of all taxes, impositions, and duties, other than the scatt, while they remained under the dominion of Scotland; yet the sad truth is, this restraint was soon broke through: for the farmers of the land-tax, during the commonwealth in Cromwell's time, extended the exaction to this country. This oppression was continued by the arbitrary council of Scotland in the reigns of Charles II. and James VII. Sometimes the country would remonstrate; but, having no representation in parliament, military drefs was the only answer; and now it is assessed with Orkney in a certain proportion of the land-tax. At present, and for many years bygone, every branch of duties, customs, and excise, under which even England's opulence groans, has been and is levied here. Formerly they were allowed to import corn from any neighbouring country they found most cheap and convenient: now they cannot have it but at the advanced price which presently threatens to depopulate Scotland by emigration, with the addition of freight and other charges, that will soon render it out of their power to pay, being, by repeated bad crops, reduced to the lowest ebb.

THIS country has long enjoyed the bounty on export of fish at 3 s. Sterling per quintal or hundred, which has arisen from 800 to 1400 l. per year. Now this is considerably abridged by order of the C——s of the C——s imposing qualities on fish never before heard, and reducing the bounty to five shillings for six score of ling, which will not defray the duties on salt, and the customhouse-expence on

on shipping the fish. This country, being by these, and some other hardships, (to enumerate which particularly would, I am afraid, lengthen this too much for you to give it room), reduced to a general state of great poverty, at a period when almost all other parts of the growing empire of Great Britain have increased in riches, is yet, because of this poverty, in no danger of being suddenly deserted by its inhabitants, they having good will to emigrate in cargoes, but have not the means. However, there is another kind of emigration, which takes place yearly, I had almost said daily, no less ruinous in its consequences.—The young men, finding themselves brought up in want of necessary food and raiment, and that their utmost endeavours, in spite of industry and frugality, will not enable them to provide the necessary means of support, leave their fathers to their fate, and go abroad, or into the sea-service, of late mostly with the English Greenland ships, many of whose captains, coming from home without having the legal complement of men, find it necessary to hire as many here as make up their muster-roll on their return; to entitle them to payment of the legal bounty, and carry away many that are pre-engaged in the country-people's service, who are thereby often greatly distressed. There are no means here to compel those captains, at the head of forty or more men to listen to equity, and make them do as they would be done by.

THE fishermen, exposed to the greatest hardships and fatigue, in their open boats, from the inclemency of the weather, never can have a drink of ale or beer.

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beer. They have been in use to get from those who purchased their fish an allowance of low priced corn-spirits, and also bought a little themselves. This is now not to be had at a moderate rate; and every article, even of the fishing apparatus, is loaded with other duties.

By these, and various other causes, this country is reduced to great poverty, and daily encreasing, from which it has no prospect of being relieved, unless the Almighty influence those who have it in their power to have also the will to apply suitable remedies, while yet they may avail, to save it from desolation, and to restore it to that state of mediocrity it has formerly enjoyed. Opulence its northern situation will never admit of. It can hardly be supposed, that the British legislature, if duly acquainted with these matters, would, for the small sums raised from this country, of cess, excise, and duties, continue to load them therewith; but, to these, and other just complaints, show that feeling and sympathy which has always been the characteristic of that august body.

If, by your publishing this, well-disposed people may think it worth their pains to make enquiry, and consequently to apply remedies, they and you will not fail to share in the blessings of the poor ready to perish; and you will much oblige, Sir, Yours, &c.

March 24. 1775.

ZETLANDICUS.

In the eye of justice, the meanest individual ought to be equally respected with the most exalted chief. →

In

In the eye of humanity, the humble plaints of the helpless sufferer will be much more respected than the blustering threats of those who are able to vindicate their own rights where they shall be attacked. If the almost groundless complaints of the Americans are respected, surely the real grievances of the helpless inhabitants of Scotland ought not to be wholly overlooked.

I know not any thing that would more exalt a British minister, than to search out and remove the hardships under which the helpless parts of the nation labour, who only sigh in secret over the ills they are doomed to suffer, and who have none to plead their cause before those in power. To redress the grievances of the rich and powerful may proceed from fear as much as justice or generosity; to succour the weak and the needy can only proceed from a truly magnanimous soul, which delights in acts of beneficence and mercy.

THE END.



in the eye of justice, the humble plaints of the helpless sufferer will be much more respected than the blustering threats of those who are able to vindicate their own rights where they shall be attacked.

